A TOUCH OF -NEW- ENGLAND

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A TOUCH OF NEW ENGLAND

MARY WOODMAN

"Backward, turn backward, oh Time! in
your flight,
Make me a child again just for to-night."

The Mistress of the Household

A TOUCH OF NEW ENGLAND

AN OLD-FASHIONED STORY
FOR YOUNG AND OLD HEARTS

BY

MARY WOODMAN

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

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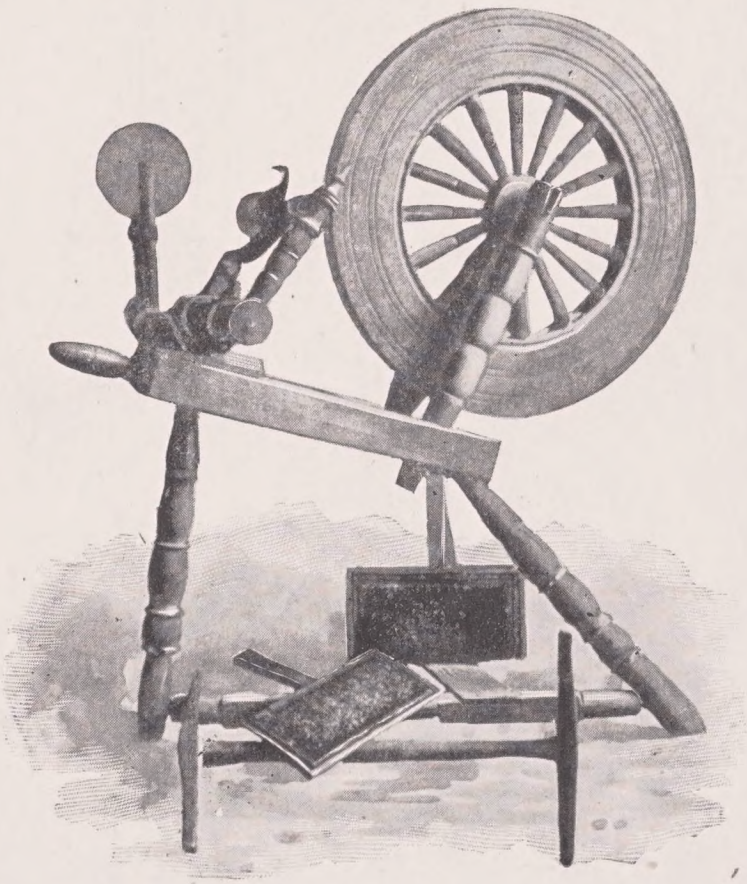


AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The story found within these pages is the annals of a New England home circle. Nearly all of the members of the family whose lights and shadows, joys and sorrows, form the foundation for the memories pictured by me here have long lain side

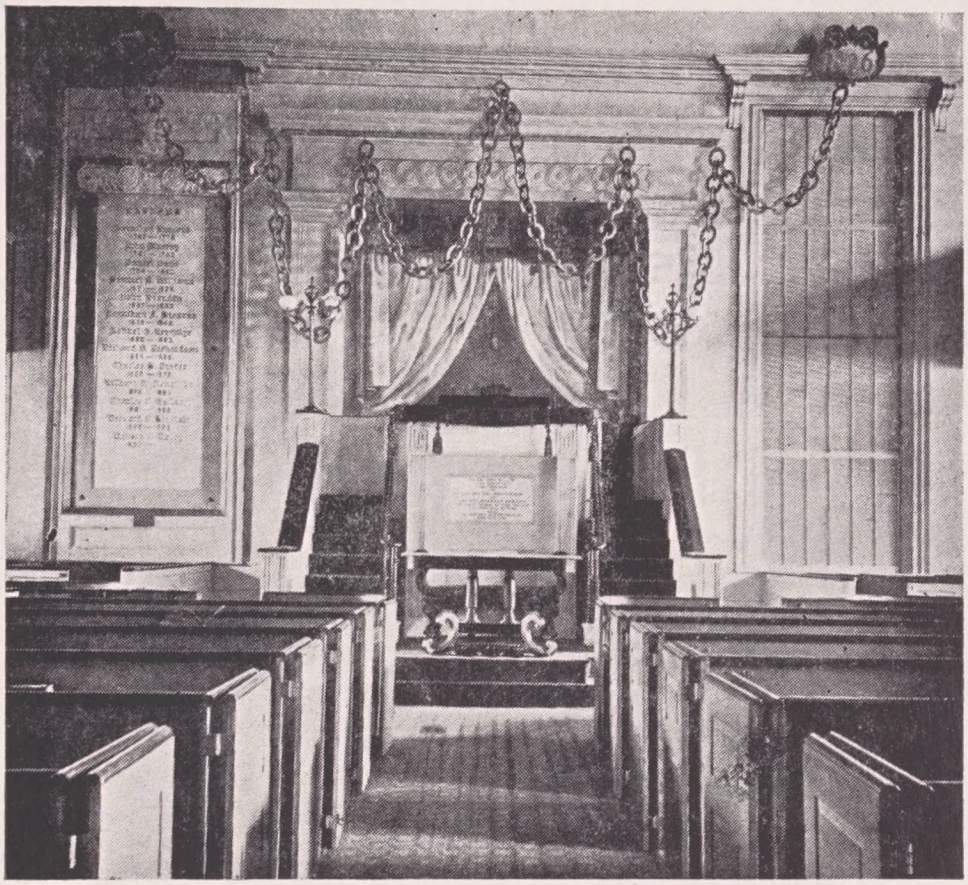
PREFACE

by side in that quiet God's acre, away from the noisy tumult of life, where against its portal is this inscription:

"When the day breaks, and the shadows flee away."

With joy and sadness, mingled with tears and smiles, I have written my story, clothing it in the every-day language of my young days, and because of that every-day language beg my friends to be charitable in their criticism, more especially asking them to overlook the lack of the wildly impossible (never in keeping with New England ideals), found in works of emotional fiction. That my book may secure its place on the family book-shelf and be cherished in certain homes as a household favorite of the old-fashioned kind, is in me to hope as a pleasing possibility despite faults of which I am very conscious.

To all those who have encouraged me in my task, particularly Mr. W. R. Cutter, a distinguished American librarian, my warmest thanks are due.



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THE OLD HOMESTEAD

" The old homestead I've not forgot,
Half hid among the trees, —
Its gable roof and garden spot,
And sweet refreshing breeze."

A TOUCH OF NEW ENGLAND

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

IT was at the close of a bright, calm day long ago in the month of June, that a travelling carriage might have been seen slowly ascending a hill which overlooked Oldbury, an

historic spot, rich in far-back Puritan lore, situated on one of the picturesque bends of the Merrimac River known to some as the "old gray town by the northern sea." The occupants of the carriage were a lady of about thirty-eight, and a gentleman, the latter a few years her senior, of large and manly form, with laughing blue eyes, and fresh, open countenance. His companion was small and delicate, a wistful expression centered in her earnest hazel eyes, where perhaps had never rested a ray of peevishness. Mr. Westburne was returning to his home after a winter sojourn in the South. He had taken the long trip flushed by the hope that a warmer, sunnier climate would restore his wife's health.

They had been silent for some time. Moved by a new thought, an anxious look came over the face of Mr. Westburne as he glanced at the pale face

Past Members of the Westburne Family

beside him. With suppressed emotion he put his arm tenderly around her. Leaning her head upon his shoulder, responsively stirred by this action, she asked, in happy tone, —

"Are we almost home?"

"Yes," he replied. "Look! we have reached the top of the hill, and see how finely, yea, lovingly, the sunset clouds hang over the dear, old town. What is more beautiful than our New England twilight, or its scenery? Drive faster, Sam, or we will not reach home till midnight!"

While the travellers are on the road, let us go before them and catch a glimpse of the old homestead with its inmates. In the higher part of the town we enter an avenue, and see, half hidden by a row of maple trees, the gable-roof of the house, and its wide porch. Honeysuckle and ivy climb around its piazza and windows, giving

"What is More Beautiful than Our New England Twilight?"

to the mansion a cheerful, homelike appearance. In one corner of the house is the sitting-room, and here we find five children under the care of an elderly person, whom we will call Nurse Ashby.

"Oh, Nurse! do you think they will come to-night?" asked Kate, the youngest girl. "You know day after to-morrow is my birthday."

"Aren't you a most selfish little pig, Kate? So you actually want a birthday present!" exclaimed Joe, the oldest boy, putting on an assumed air of great wisdom, adding, "I shall certainly be glad to see our father back again and give you precious girls into his charge. Anyhow, I guess I deserve a good big reward for my pains in that direction."

"Well, you got a real nice reward yesterday when I boxed your ears for picking the frosting from the birthday-

"An Elderly Person Whom We Will Call Nurse Ashby"

cake Aunt Mary sent to Kate,'' replied Alice.

"Yes,'' cried little Tommy, lifting his curly head from the sofa. "All last winter almost every night when Joe came to bed he pushed me out of my warm side. Each time he did that I woke up. Now, if Kate is a selfish pig, then Joe's a sly old fox.''

"Oh, children, don't call each other such names! How it would grieve Mother and Father if they should hear you! This is the first time they have ever left us! Only think how dreadful it would be if we were orphans. I do hope that mamma is better,'' said Ruth.

The sister's words had the desired effect. Kate and Tommy hid their faces in the sofa pillows.

"Come, children, let us see who will hear the carriage first,'' said Nurse Ashby. And while they are listening,

I will give my readers a description of the group.

Ruth was seventeen, with large, dreamy eyes, a sweet, sensitive mouth, wavy hair, and a slender, graceful figure. Alice was fair, with gray eyes, a decided mouth, thick brown hair, which hung in braids below her waist: her chief beauty was her small hands and feet, and her greatest annoyance the freckles on her cheeks. Joseph, or Joe as he was generally called, was a stout boy of thirteen, with pretty blue eyes and light hair. Kate had a small, round face, with bright, light brown eyes, a mouth that was always showing the dimples in her cheeks, and hair cut short, like her brothers. Tommy was a robust little fellow of nine years, and resembled his father.

"Oh, Bridget! don't bring the lights yet, it is so pleasant to sit in the twilight with the windows open. The

lights bring mosquitos, and my face has specks enough without mosquito-bites,'' ejaculated Alice.

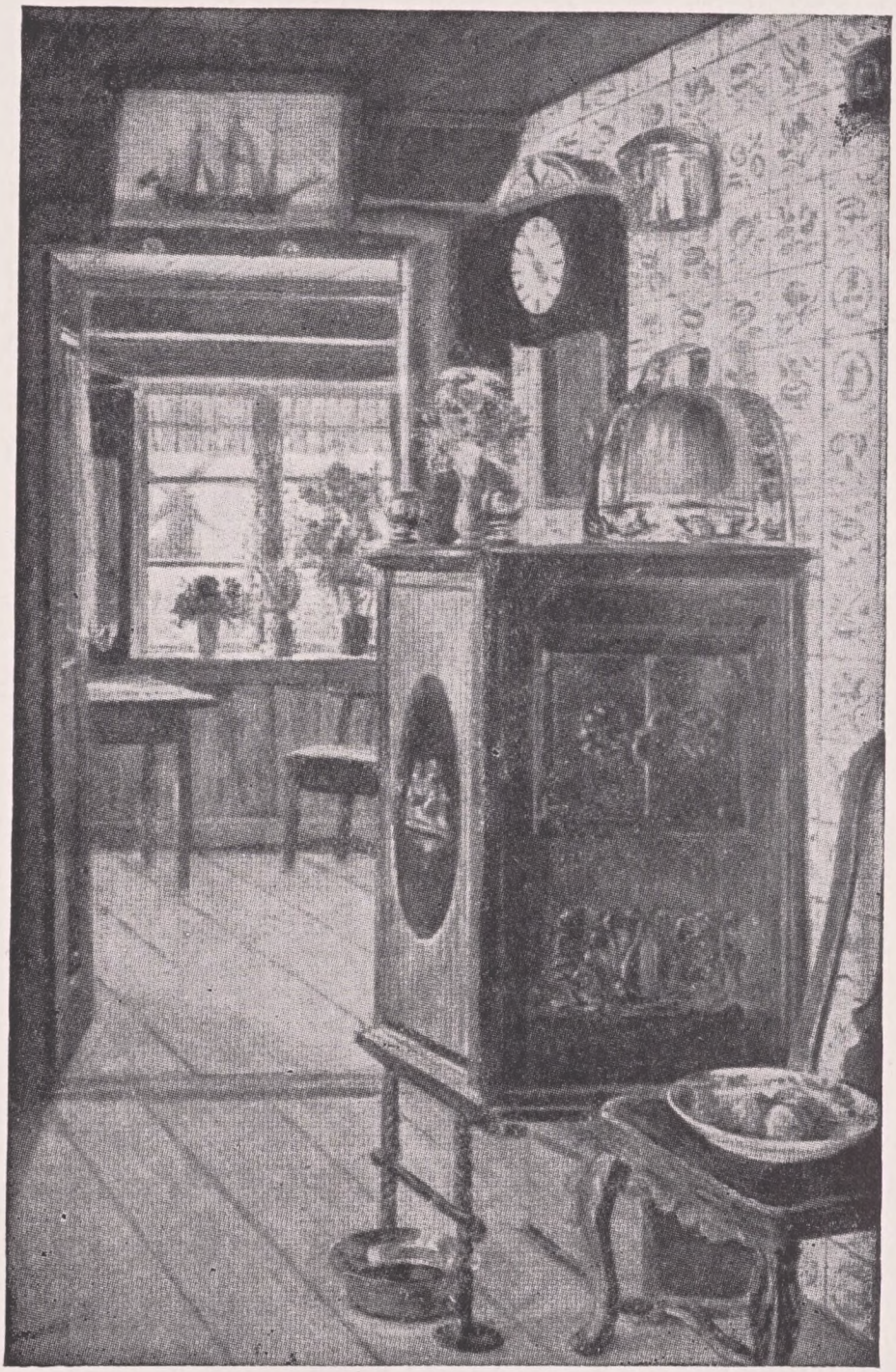
"You had better light the hall-lamp, Bridget, and see that supper is ready when Mr. Westburne comes ; they will be tired and hungry,'' said Nurse.

"Faith, to be sure that they will, and me poor dear missus; St. Patrick bless her sweet soul! A good cup of tay and a good night's rest will she want.'' And Bridget bustled out of the room.

Ruth fetched forth her father's dressing-gown, while Alice routed Kate and Tommy from the sofa, shook the pillows, and made it comfortable for their mother's coming.

Joe stretched himself under a table, and Tommy took refuge in Nurse's lap, while Kate leaned out of the window to listen.

"They are coming! I hear the sound of the wheels,'' shouted Kate;



The Old Clock in the Hall

and away she flew with Joe and Tommy at her heels.

"Mamma! papa!" screamed the excited children; and soon they were clasped in loving arms.

Kate cried and laughed at the same time. Tommy clung to his father's neck, while Joe contented himself with a kiss.

There was as much love but less agitation in the embraces of Ruth and Alice.

"How happy I am to see this room and my dear children again!" murmured Mrs. Wesburne with a happy sigh, when Ruth had laid aside the dusty wrapper and was putting the cool slippers on her feet, as she lay on the sofa.

"There's no place like home, and to know how to appreciate a good home, a man ought to travel awhile, and live in hotels and boarding-houses," ob-

served Mr. Westburne, whilst putting on his dressing-gown.

"Supper never tasted so good before!" fervently exclaimed Tommy, as the last spoonful of strawberry jam disappeared into his small mouth.

The old clock in the hall struck ten, and the children's heads began to droop.

Ruth went to the piano and played one of her mother's favorite songs, —

My childhood home, and thee.

The good-night kiss was given, and the children were soon in the land of dreams.

Ruth and Alice could not disregard their mother's pale face, and their father's watchful eye.

"Mamma reminded me of Aunt Jane to-night," said Alice.

"But mother has no cough, and Aunt Jane had," pleaded Ruth.

Nurse Ashby entered the room, as was her custom.

"Oh, dear, dear Nurse! tell us what you think of mamma," cried Ruth.

"I think, my dearies, your mother is very weary, and a good night's rest will refresh her. I am sure you will find her better to-morrow."

Nurse Ashby was a widow, and had long lived in the Westburne family, in fact, since Ruth was born; she was so gentle and motherly with the children that Mrs. Wesburne found it impossible to think of parting with her.

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

"When first our scanty years are told,
It seems like pastime to grow old;
And as youth counts the shining links
That time around us binds so fast,
Pleased with the task, we little think
How hard that chain will press at last."

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY.

"WHY, how you have grown!" exclaimed Mrs. Westburne as Kate entered her mother's room the next morning.

"Yes, mamma. Nurse says that all the tucks in my dresses must be taken out. Joe says I run so much, I shall be as tall as Bridget; beside, you know, mamma, I shall be eleven years old

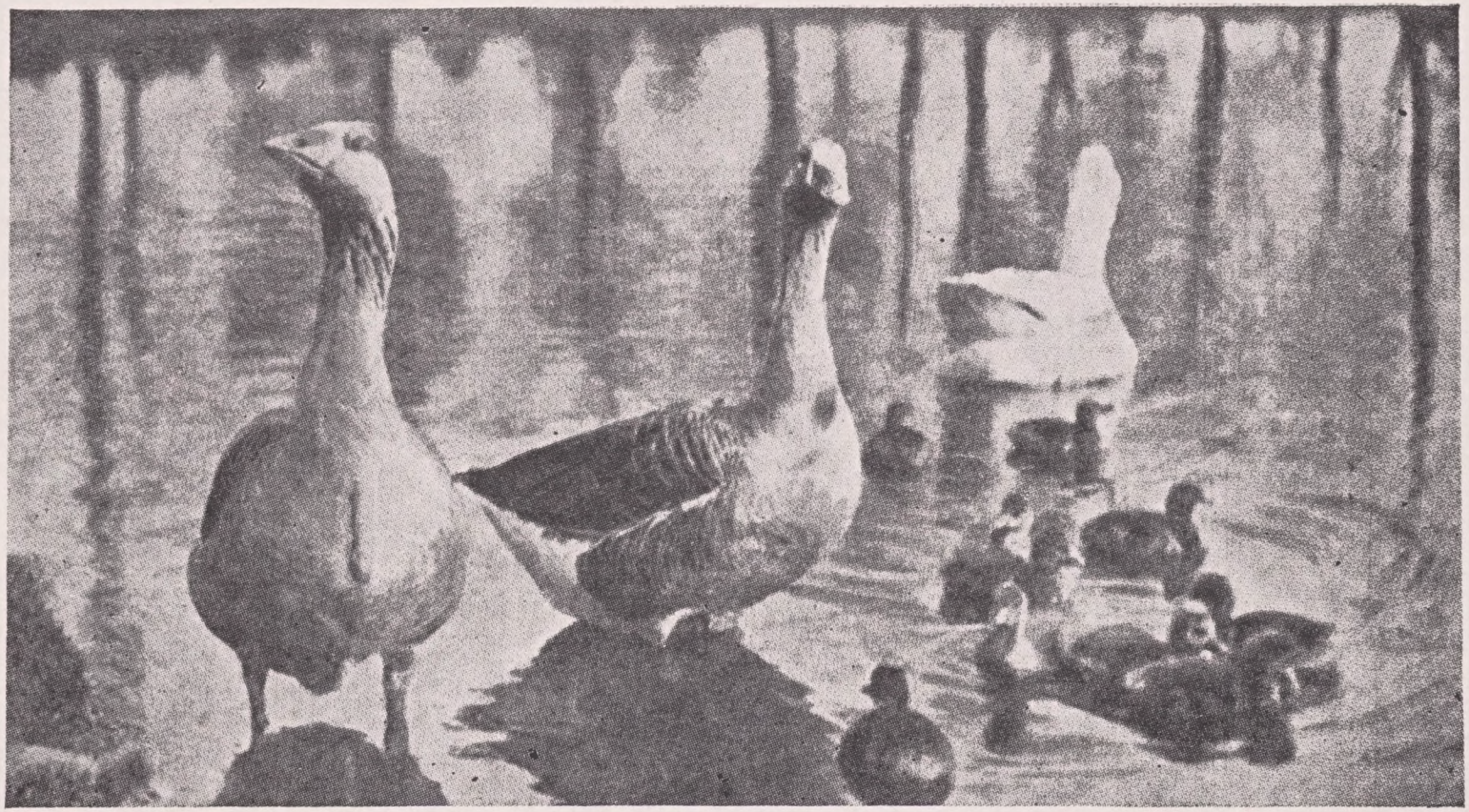
to-morrow. Nurse has made me a new white dress trimmed with lace, and the sleeves are looped with blue ribbon; and with my blue sash I shall look just lovely to-morrow!"

As Nurse Ashby had said, a night's rest had quite refreshed the invalid, whose lively greeting and bright smile, as she entered the breakfast-room, cheered the hearts of Alice and Ruth.

After breakfast the girls told their mother the plans they had made for Kate's birthday.

"I thought, if you had no objection, I would invite Mrs. Morse and Dora in the afternoon, and Mr. Morse and Arthur could come to tea," said Ruth.

"Certainly; it would be very pleasant. Call Sam, and send the invitation at once. I bought each of you a dress in New York. I hope you will like them," said Mrs. Westburne, opening her trunk.



The Water Babes of Oldbury

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed the girls, examining the soft gray material; "and one for Kate. What a lovely blue, — just what she has been wanting! What's that?"

"Some cloth to make suits for Joe and Tommy; a dress for Nurse, one for Bridget, and a couple of flannels for Sam."

"How thoughtful you are, mamma, not to forget any one," said Alice.

"The way to be happy, is to make others happy," replied her mother.

The trunks were emptied, and the drawers arranged, when Bridget entered to put the room in order.

"A new dress for you, a present from mamma, Biddy!" cried Alice.

"Och, honey! me missis is too good to the likes o' me, plase, yer honor, I'll sarve ye faithfully to the end o' me days!" exclaimed the honest Irish girl.

"Many happy birthdays," shouted

Joe, the next morning, behind Kate's chair at the breakfast-table, and pulling her ears.

"Oh, Joe, don't be so rude! now my ears will look like a rooster's comb all day," continued Kate. "I'm the only one in the family whose birthday has a public celebration every year."

"How is that?" asked Joe.

"Oh, you ignorant boy! haven't you studied the history of your country? Don't you know that the battle of Bunker Hill was fought on the 17th of June, and that I was born on that day?" said Kate, with a proud toss of her little head, as she sipped her coffee.

"Born while the battle was going on, sure?" jeeringly answered Joe, bursting into a loud laugh, and dropping his bread and butter.

"I mean that I was born on the 17th of June, eleven years ago," replied Kate, with dignity.

"Why didn't you say so, then?"

"Be quiet, Joe, and eat your breakfast, or I'll send you away from the table," said his father.

Sam, with the boys' help, placed a long table in the large summer-house. Ruth and Alice spread the snow-white cloth, and arranged in vases the sweet June roses and pinks, which seemed to bow and smile, and send forth their sweetest fragrance in honor of the day. Kate looked, as she said, "just lovely." Joe was on his best behavior. He and Tommy were looking forward to the feast and the evening games.

"Kate!" shouted Tommy, running into the summer-house, "Hattie Gage, Ellen Gray, and Annie Foster have come."

Kate took her little schoolmates to her room to see her presents. Ruth's embroidered slippers were tried on. Alice's copy of *Mrs. Hemans's Poems*

with its blue and gilt covers, was examined and admired. Nurse's red knit shawl was considered a beauty, and little Tommy's album, with the photograph of his bright little face, was sweet. While they were chattering, other children entered the room, followed by Jack Gray, Tommy, and Joe bringing a large paper parcel.

"What have you there, Joe?" asked Kate.

"A 'Bunker Hill Monument' bank. I thought you would like one for your pennies, to celebrate the day you were born and when that famous battle was fought," and here Joe displayed a miniature monument of carved wood, covered with gilt bands.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Kate.

"I bought it at Lee's fancy store. He purchased a number in Charlestown last year, and this was the only one left."

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

The summer-house, with the sunlight dancing through the vines and flowers, the sweet fragrance of the June roses, and the grand old trees with the merry birds, gave a charm to the scene, and enlivened the children's play.

"Let us go on the hill and play ball!" shouted Jack.

Tommy ran for the bats and balls. Instead of whirling the balls into the air the girls would often send them down hill.

Jumping the rope was the next amusement, but the boys were as clumsy swinging the rope as the girls had been with the bats.

It was a happy group of bright faces that gathered around the table in the long, cool summer-house. Exercise had sharpened their appetites. How good the plum-cake, tarts, and sandwiches tasted; and the boys enjoyed the fun of leaping over each other's

backs, eating cookies and drinking lemonade, between the pauses. When all had eaten enough, Joe arose, with a glass of lemonade, and shouted, "Many happy birthdays, Kate! and three cheers for the 17th of June!" and every one's health was drunk in lemonade.

"Now I will tell your fortune!" exclaimed Kate, taking a little book from her pocket, and turning her eyes to her little schoolmates.

"What a way Kate has of rolling her eyes!" said Jack.

"That is the force of habit," laughed Joe. "I once read of a man who had such a habit of bowing that he would bow to his horse, and thank the beast after he had dismounted; beg pardon of a puppy for treading on its tail; and one day, as he fell over the door-scraper, he took off his hat and apologized for his inattention."

"Be quiet, Joe," said Kate.

"Come, Annie, choose some number to twelve when I ask you a question.

"Whom do you intend to marry?"

"Three."

"A chimney-sweeper."

"Oh, I won't have my fortune told."

"Do," laughed Hattie.

"Of course it isn't true! Go on, Kate."

"What is his height?"

"Five."

"Six and a half feet."

"A giant! how will he go up chimney?" asked Jack.

"What is the color of his eyes?"

"Seven."

"Black."

"With soot," laughed Joe.

"How old is he?"

"Nine."

"Eighty-five."

"Oh, horrors!" shouted Ellen.

"Where did you first see him?"

"Six."

"On the roof of the house."

"What was he doing?"

"Four."

"Saying his prayers."

"Where shall you live?"

"Two."

"In a pig-sty."

"Gracious, how I shall enjoy life!" laughed Annie.

Leaving the children at their play we will enter the house. The wide porch-door was open, admitting a soft breeze, sweet with the odor of the honey-suckle. In the long parlor, with its fine old-fashioned furniture, ancient family portraits, and a few valuable paintings adorning the walls, sat Ruth, Alice, and Dora Morse who were conversing in one of the deep window-seats.

Mrs. Westburne was reclining in an arm-chair; and by her side sat her inti-

A Happy Group

mate friend, Mrs. Morse, who had just finished reading Longfellow's Evangeline.

Meditating upon the poem, an hour went by, finally Mrs. Westburne exclaimed:

"True happiness can never be found in this world without the pure and elevating power of religion. When the soul can see and enjoy God in all His works, when we love to commune with Him and feel that peace which the world cannot give, then we know what is true happiness. All nature proclaims that God is love." And as the poet says:

"Thus my Creator, thus the more,
My spirit's wing to Thee can soar;
The more she triumphs to behold,
Thy love in all Thy works unfold,
And bids her hymns of rapture be
Most glad when rising most to Thee!"

"Yes, the heart that can praise God in adversity, as well as in prosperity, is truly happy. How thankful I am that Arthur has chosen the ministry to labor for God, and not for the perishing things of the world," said Mrs. Morse. The entrance of her husband and Arthur, followed by Mr. Westburne, put an end to the conversation.

Edward Westburne and Philip Morse had been friends from boyhood, and had entered business together. Arthur and Dora were Philip Morse's only children. Ruth and Arthur had been attached to each other from childhood. They attended school at the same academy, and during the long winter evenings they studied the same lessons in the pleasant sitting-room, or talked of the future by the cheerful wood-fire that burned in the enormous fireplace. What castles they built! What plans they laid! Alas! never to be fulfilled.

How the expressions coming from her pure heart animated him along the path he had chosen!

The early tea was over, and they had returned to the parlor.

"So Arthur goes to Princeton. He is not looking as well as he did last summer," remarked Mr. Westburne.

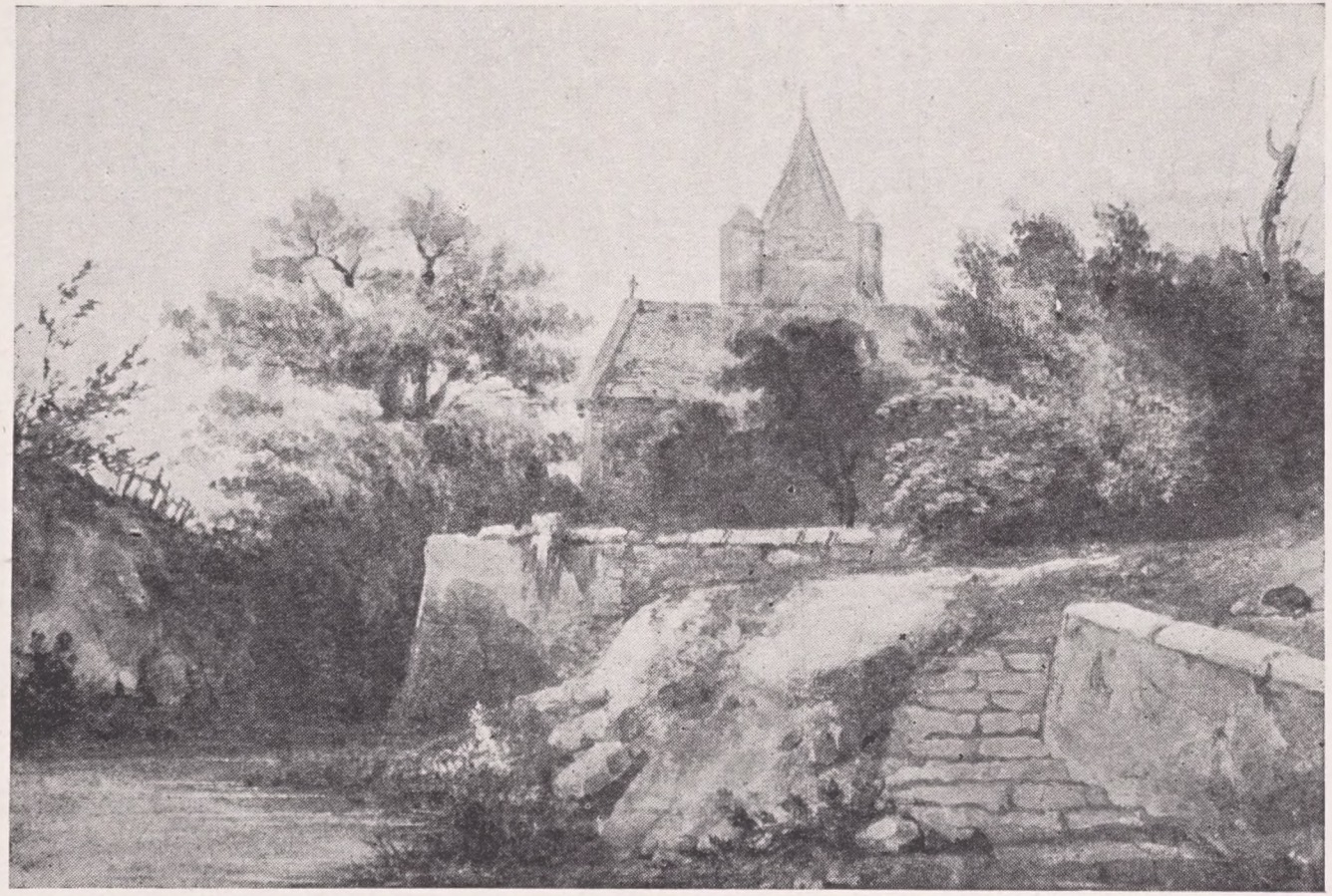
"He has studied too much, and needs a rest. Don't you remember, Ned, how thin I was when I was Arthur's age?"

"Yes; but it wasn't hard study, Phil, that made you thin, it was the midnight vigils; and with your long, sober face no one suspected you," laughed Mr. Westburne.

"Do you remember that night we tied the old white horse to the bell-rope of the old church?"

"How was that?" asked Mrs. Morse.

"Well, you know my father was the



The Old Village Church

pastor of what was then called the old village church. The old church which was pulled down stood in the graveyard opposite the place where the new church now stands. Green, the sexton, had an old white horse, named Billy, who was lame, and blind in one eye; always half starved, and wandering about the fields and roads. One day Ned and I wanted some fun. I caught the horse in the afternoon, and tied him in the wood-shed. Ned, who knew that the key hung under the old man's hat in the entry, went to Green's house, and putting the key into his pocket, he slipped out, and stayed with me that night, as he often did. My bedroom window was above the kitchen roof, which was low. At midnight we jumped from the roof, took the old horse and a large bundle of hay, went to the church, shortened the bell-rope, tied it around the horse's neck, and

put the hay under his nose. He was hungry, and pulled well at the rope while we were running home. The bell began to ring. Soon the cry of fire was heard. We went up the short spout at the end of the roof, and into the chamber-window, and were snoring when Father opened the door. It was a moonlight night. Many persons were in the graveyard trying to look into the window, but no one dared to enter the church. At last a man lifted a boy, whose teeth chattered as he said it was 'a long white object, bobbing up and down.' 'A ghost!' was whispered from one to another, when Green came tearing among them, saying, 'Some one has stolen the church key.' They told him it was a white object ringing the bell. 'I'll be blowed if it isn't my old horse! I couldn't find him to-day;' and marching up to the door, he gave it a kick, calling 'Billy,' to which the

horse responded with a long neigh. The old man threatened to give every boy in town a cowhiding. The next day I heard my father say to Deacon Moody, 'I know it wasn't Phil nor Ned Westburne, for I found them asleep.' ''

Here the children entered, calling for Ruth and Alice to arrange the tableaus. A platform was laid on one side of the large sitting-room. Shrubbery and potted plants gave it the appearance of a garden. An impromptu scene, to wit, "The Sleeping Child and Guardian Angel" was arranged. Cushions were placed on the edge of the stage, on which Kate lay; one of her plump arms appearing over her head. Ruth stood on high steps, dressed in a long white robe, her dark hair hanging loose below the waist, a crown of white lilies upon her head, and she folded her hands over the head of Kate, and lifted high her beautiful eyes. Joe and

"The Old Man Threatened to Give Every Boy in Town a Cowhiding"

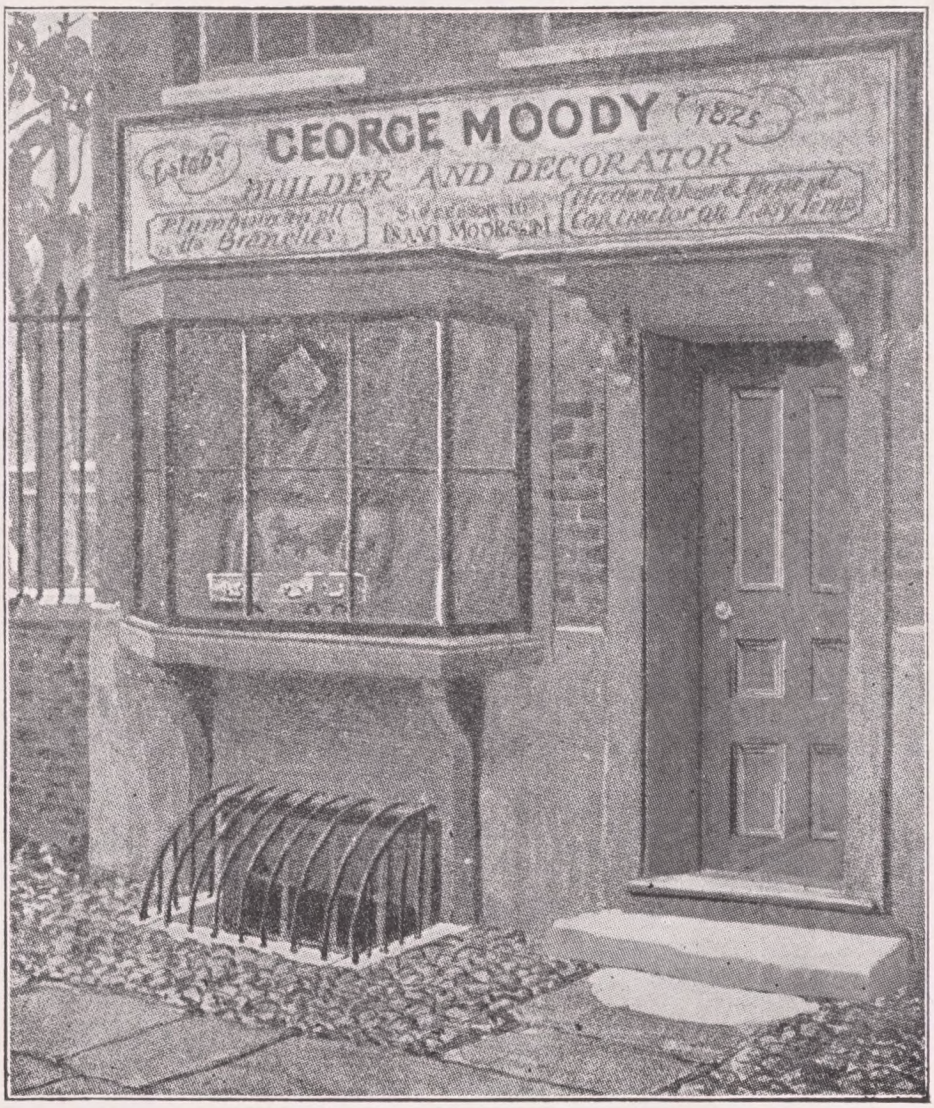
Tommy stood at each end of the stage to draw the curtain when Alice gave the signal. Lights were placed to give the best effect, and the curtain was slowly opened.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Mrs. Morse, while tears stood in the eyes of Mrs. Westburne.

"O Arthur! you have often called Ruth an angel, — doesn't she look like one now?" asked Dora, as her brother's eyes were intensely fixed upon the sweet face.

The curtain was slowly closed.

"Now the Indians!" shouted the children, running upon the stage. Jack and Tommy, dressed like the redman, were looking through the shrubbery. Alice and Kate personated squaws sitting upon the ground. Joe was in his glory, for he was the warrior. In the belt around his waist hung a number of old wigs, representing the scalps of



Where Deacon Moody Held Forth

those he had killed. Indeed his face looked frightful with the red and black paint. He had crept near the children, who were huddled together behind some bushes, and with pale, frightened faces were gazing on him as with lifted tomahawk he was about to spring upon them.

"Bravo!" greeted the spectators. The cheering was too much for Joe, who gave a spring. The children screamed, the curtain was drawn, and the mirth was uproarious.

"Let us have that again!" shouted Joe.

"No," cried the children, "You have frightened us enough!"

After their supper the children stood around the piano and sang, while Ruth played that beautiful old song, "Good-bye."

"Farewell, farewell, is a lonely sound,
And often brings a sigh,

But give to me, when loved ones part,
That sweet old word, Good-by."

At last the clock struck ten. The children declared they had "never had so jolly a time."

Sam entered the room, saying that the carriage was ready; and with merry "Good-byes" from her little friends, Kate's birthday was ended.

THE FOURTH OF JULY

"My country, 'tis of Thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of Thee I'll sing;
Land where my fathers died;
Land of the Pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring."

CHAPTER III.

THE FOURTH OF JULY.

IT was late in the afternoon, the day before the Fourth of July. Ruth and her mother were alone in the sitting-room. Ruth was sewing, and the happy expression on her face showed contentment. Her mother noticed it, and laid down the book she was reading.

"You have pleasant thoughts, Ruth?"

"Yes, mamma. I was thinking how nice and sweet it was to have you back with us again. Every day I missed you and papa. The return to our quiet, restful home-life is just like sunshine after a long, cloudy day."

The face of the mother grew sad as she thought of that day when she must part with her dear ones.

"Those long winter evenings when you or papa would read to us our evening prayers, your advice, the good-night kiss, were blessings I did not know how to prize until I was deprived of them," continued Ruth.

"It is only when we lose that which the heart needs that we feel the worth of what we have lost. We must learn to part with much that is dear to us, to prepare for our home in the great eternity."

"You are better than you were before you went to Florida, are

you not, mamma?'' asked Ruth anxiously.

''I think I am some better, although sometimes I feel very weak; but let us be resigned to our Heavenly Father's will. And now tell me about the Sunday-school celebration to-morrow.''

''Well, mamma, we go to the Laurel grounds in carriages and have a picnic ; afterwards a sail to Deer Island. Mr. and Mrs. Churchill will go, and we have arranged three carriages. One represents the Goddess of Liberty, another the Four Seasons; and another Day and Night. Dora Morse represents Liberty; Alice, Day ; and I, Night. The children go in carryalls, and form a procession at the church. Nurse and I have settled upon my black bombazine dress with gilt paper stars. Alice dresses in white.''

''And what am I to be?'' exclaimed Kate, coming in from school with her

hat hanging by the strings, and followed by Joe and Tommy.

"You can dress in white, and walk in the procession with the other little girls."

" 'Tis what I did last Fourth of July, and I was tired enough. I don't want to be a little mouse. If I can't be a long-tailed rat, and ride in a carriage, I won't go. There now! I'll stay at home with mamma," said Kate, tenderly pressing her cheek to her mother's.

" I shall go. All the boys are going. I shall take my bow and arrows, and hunt squirrels in the woods. You had better go, Kate. There will be plenty of trees to climb. You will lose lots of fun, besides the goodies."

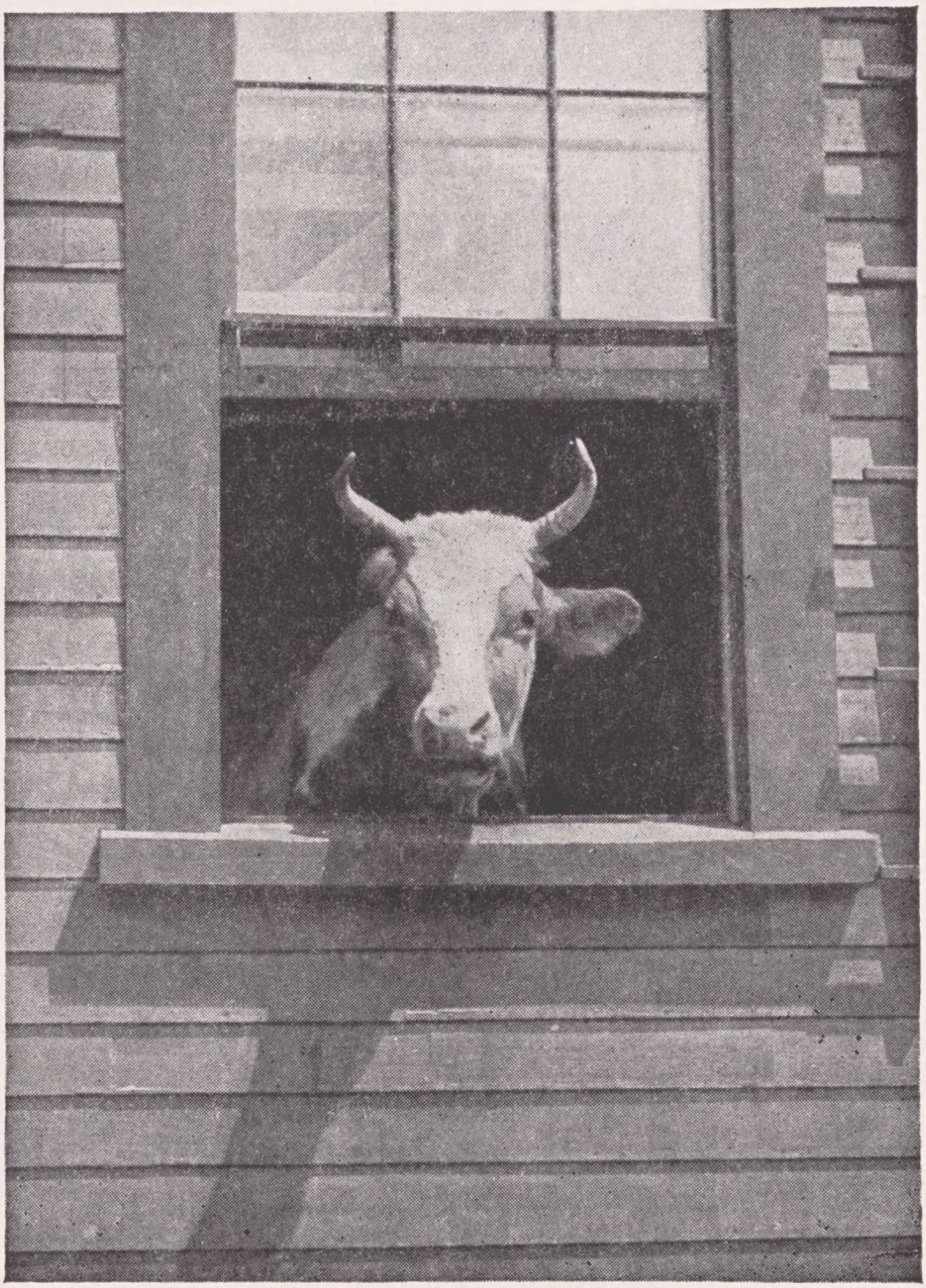
" How foolish you talk, Joe! How can I climb trees in my white dress, before the minister and his wife and all the people? I can buy goodies with

the money father gives me to-morrow. I would rather stay with mamma.''

''Then nurse can go with us, and I will bring you something nice,'' said Tommy.

The next morning the boys were up before sunrise. No one could sleep. The blowing of tin horns, beating on old tin pans, whistles, fire-crackers, — anything and everything that could make a noise was called into action.

What man does not remember how when a boy his heart leaped at the sound of the Fourth of July? How he would hoard his pennies to buy powder and fire-crackers! He was never tired of hearing stories of that glorious old time when his ancestors threw off the yoke of oppression and declared themselves free and independent of any king. Ah, those happy childhood days! How the heart grows young again when we think of them!



Wondering What the Boys Were At

Joe and Tommy came to the breakfast-table with keen appetites.

"Oh, father, I would like to be a soldier when I'm a man. I would always fight for liberty and right. And father, that Revolutionary gun of grandfather's, hanging over the kitchen door, you promised to me. I want to show it to my grandchildren when I'm an old man, and tell them how their great-grandfather thrashed the English. Don't I wish I had been alive then! Wouldn't I have pitched into the rascals!" and Joe brought his fist down with force, making the dishes rattle on the table.

"Why, Joe," said his father, "you are looking a great way ahead."

"And old King George called us donkeys!" exclaimed Tommy with indignation. "We soon showed him he was the biggest donkey when we kicked off his shackles."

"Who told you that, Tommy?" asked Ruth, laughing.

"It is an anecdote I read in my reading-book. A gentleman told King George that his subjects in America would declare war if he put such heavy taxes on them. 'Oh, no!' exclaimed the old king; 'the heavier the burdens you put upon donkeys' backs, the steadier they bear them.' The old tyrant!" shouted Tommy.

"I'm glad to see your patriotism," said Mr. Westburne, smiling, "but you must not let it run away with your judgment."

The boys promised their father that they would not play with powder or fire; and, dressed in their Sunday clothes, they started for the place where the children were to congregate.

The carriage was at the door to take Ruth, Alice, and Nurse with a large basket, to the vestry.

Kate looked after them with wistful eyes.

"I should like to go, but I know father likes to have Nurse go to look after the boys, and she will enjoy it, too. Last Fourth, when we went to 'Indian Hill Farm,' she stayed at home with mamma. But what shall I do all this long day?" thought Kate. "I will go to the garden and see if there are any lilies of the valley and June pinks blooming yet." And Kate forgot her loneliness as she flitted like a butterfly from flower to flower. With a face glowing with happiness she entered the sitting-room.

"Look, mamma, — the first white rose that has bloomed on my bush, and the last of the lilies of the valley."

"How sweet!" said her mother.

"Come here, Kate," said her father. "How is it that you did not go to the picnic? Are you ill?"

"What Makes the Country Look so Beautiful?"

"No, papa. I thought it was better for Nurse to go."

"And deny yourself a pleasure to make others happy. I am glad to see my little girl practice self-denial. After lunch, if mamma would like, we will drive into the country.

"Nothing would please me more. I would like to call at Betsy Shaw's cottage. Nurse told me she had a fall on the ice last winter and broke her arm."

Kate prepared a basket with various things which Mrs. Westburne thought Betsy would need.

"Come, get ready," said her father after lunch, and they were soon on the road.

"Oh, father! please stop here a moment!" exclaimed Kate as they passed a store.

She soon entered the carriage with a bundle and a happy face.

"What have you in the bundle, Kate?" asked her mother.

"Some calico to make a dress for Mary Shaw. I bought it with the money father gave me this morning; won't she be happy when I show it to her?"

Her mother answered with a kiss and a smile.

"What makes the country look so beautiful? The birds never sang so sweetly and I never enjoyed a ride so much as to-day," thought Kate.

They soon came in sight of Mrs. Shaw's cottage; and, taking her bundle and the basket, Kate opened the little gate, and ran up to the door, which was open.

Mary was spinning as they entered, and her grandmother had been trying to do some mending that lay in her lap. A bed with its snow-white quilt stood in one corner. A large Bible

lay on a small table, and on the window-seat was an old pitcher filled with wild flowers. Everything about the room was beautifully clean. Not a speck of dust could be seen on the high-backed flag-bottomed chairs.

The cottage had only four rooms, and this was a bedroom and sitting-room. Mrs. Shaw was a Quaker, of average height, rather stout, with an abundance of gray hair, and such a pleasant, motherly face that one was sure to find sympathy in her kind heart. Her support was a small pension, and the little land around her cottage, on which she raised a few vegetables and kept a cow.

"You had a bad fall in the winter?" asked Mrs. Westburne after she had greeted her old friend.

"Yes. It was in January I broke my arm. Mary was in school, and it was a long while before the doctor

came. It is yet weak. Old bones don't knit together like young ones.''

While Mrs. Westburne and Mrs. Shaw were conversing, Kate drew her father into the barn to see the cow and Mary's chickens.

''Now come and see my kittens,'' said Mary as they entered the neat kitchen, where three kittens were nestled in an old basket.

''What a beauty this one is, with its white face and paws!'' exclaimed Kate.

''Don't you want it?'' asked Mary.

''Oh, yes, thank you! I have no pet; but I must keep it out of Joe's'way, for he likes to tease cats,'' replied Kate. ''I have brought you a Fourth of July present;'' and she unrolled the pink calico before the admiring eyes of Mary.

''You know this is the anniversary of our independence, and we must not

forget our friends on this glorious day,'' said Mrs. Westburne, taking from the basket sugar, coffee, ham, butter, a large pie, a bag of cookies, and a package of Oolong tea.

'' How good the Lord is to give me such kind friends!'' said Mrs. Shaw, with grateful tears in her eyes.

'' Come and make us a visit soon,'' said Mr. Westburne as he closed the little wicket.

It was six o'clock when Nurse and the other children returned from the picnic.

'' See, Kate, I didn't forget you,'' said Tommy, handing Kate a bag of cocoanut-cakes.

'' I bought you something, too!'' exclaimed Joe, turning his pocket inside out, and with it a piece of twine, a number of broken pencils, a fish-hook, a bit of candy, and half a lozenge.

"'Tisn't there," said he, putting his hand into his other pocket, and pulling out a paper parcel. "Here 'tis, Kate: spruce gum enough to last you with cuds for six months. I know what you like," said Joe, as he saw Kate's eyes sparkle.

"It is good and thoughtful of you, boys, to remember me. Did you have a good time?"

"Jolly time! I shot at two squirrels, chased a rabbit, and fell over a stone wall, broke down in one of the swings, and went to sail on the river with Jack Talbot, Dick Hill, and Tommy," responded Joe.

"Yes, and the old boat leaked. I had to bail the water out with my new straw hat," said Tommy. "And every one was asking for you, Kate."

"I went to ride with father and mother to see Mrs. Shaw; and Mary gave me this little kitten. Look! isn't

it a beauty? Don't pull its tail, Joe! Oh, Biddy, bring me some milk! I'm sure it is hungry."

"Father is going to take us to see the fireworks on the Common," said Alice, entering the room.

"Oh, won't that be jolly! Hurrah for the Fourth of July! I wish it would come every week," shouted Joe.

"Every week is too much, and too much of a good thing is sometimes good for nothing," said Tommy.

"How wise you are, Tommy! Is that original?" laughed Alice.

"No: it is a proverb I saw in my dictionary."

"Oh! I thought it was one of Solomon's. Go on, Tommy, learning and teaching all the proverbs you can find, and when you are a man you will be as wise as old King Solomon. Now, don't say I never gave you good advice," said Joe.

Watching and Waiting

After supper the children went to their mother's room to have a chat in the twilight, as was their custom. Mrs. Westburne sat in her arm-chair by the open window: she smiled as she listened to their account of the day.

"Father is going to take us in the two-seated wagon. Isn't that capital, we shall not be crowded!" exclaimed Joe.

The children gave their mother the good-night kiss, but Kate lingered.

"Come, Kate," said Ruth. "You must see the fire-works."

"I'm coming! Oh, mamma! I did not tell you that on my birthday I made some resolutions. One was self-denial, — another to give to the poor. I heard you say there was great pleasure in giving to the needy, and I never knew how much of Heaven we could have in this world until to-day."

"You have made me happy; and, my dear child, let those resolutions go with you through life.'

Mrs. Westburne sat long in the twilight looking at the silent stars, her heart filled with God's love, and pleading His promises for her dear husband and children, and for herself grace and strength to submit to His will.

SCHOOL DAYS AND VACATION

"Old schoolhouse, adieu to your rusty door!
Enough for the present of learned store,
Till we return in cooler days
To books, and sports, and girlish ways."

CHAPTER IV.

SCHOOL DAYS AND VACATION.

VACATION! what word was more sweet to our childish ears? How our heads have ached over the hard problems and long lessons until we thought no lot was so wretched as that of a school-girl's!

It was the first of August. A group of girls, earnestly talking, were standing on the playground around the schoolhouse.

"I call it real mean to have to be shut up in that hot schoolhouse another week, just to let the first class study a little more for their examination for the high school! If they hadn't been so plaguey lazy they would have been prepared; and," continued May Wilson, "I shall stay at home to-morrow."

"And Mose Chase" (as the girls called their master when they were angry with him) "will send to your house to know why you are absent," said Emma Carey. "I don't believe the first class had anything to do with it. I think it was Mose Chase's idea when the committee came this morning," continued Emma.

"I hope every one will fail in the examination," said another.

"I don't. I hope they will all go. Get rid of the conceits, and give us a chance. Look at them parading the school-yard two and two, studying as

if their lives depended upon it. They don't pretend to speak to us now, they feel so grand!'' exclaimed Hattie Gage.

"I'm sure Lizzie Taylor is not a bit stuck-up. How sad she looks in that black dress! Poor girl! she has no one but her grandmother now,'' said Emma.

"Well, yes; she and Sallie Tilton are exceptions,'' replied Hattie.

"I wonder if Mose Chase is going to teach next winter?'' asked Nellie Gray.

"Good gracious! I hope not. I can't get a chance to eat a bit of anything I bring to school, and I'm always half-starved when I study in the winter. Don't you remember, girls,'' continued May, "how his desk was loaded with our goodies last winter, and he pretended to throw them away? I believe he carried them home to eat for his dessert; and that delicious pear

that he took from me this morning, I didn't get a taste of it, — and I was going to give all of you a bite. If he eats that, I do hope it will stick in his throat,'' exclaimed the indignant May.

"Father says Mr. Page is a better teacher. I'm sure I didn't learn much from his way of teaching,'' said Annie Foster.

"In some respects he may be better, but we could eat before Page's eyes and he would think we were studying; besides, he was near-sighted, — a good defect in a teacher,'' said May.

"Hallo! there comes Kate Westburne. Oh, Kate, to-morrow isn't to be vacation, just on account of those wretches in the first class!''

"That is too bad. I'm sorry for you girls; but I am not coming, for papa takes us all to the seashore to-morrow. Mamma is going for her health.''

"Can't we club together, and not come to-morrow?" asked Nellie Gray.

"Be careful what you say. 'Little pigs have big ears.' Look over your shoulder, Nellie."

There stood Mollie Bates, the greatest tattler in school.

"Take that for listening, and scamper, you little blab-tale," cried Nellie, giving her a slight box on the ear.

"I'll blab now, you see if I don't!" shouted Mollie, shaking her fist when she was at a safe distance.

"That little elf is the nuisance of the school. She will be sure to tell, so our game can't be played,—and there goes the bell!" exclaimed Annie.

Mollie stood by the master's desk as the girls entered the schoolroom. The day was sultry, and Mr. Chase looked warm and cross. He was vigorously fanning himself with his handkerchief; and after the girls had taken their seats,

"The Sea was so Placid"

he arose and stamped upon the floor with such force that it sent Mollie speeding to her seat, and caused the girls to start with fear.

"The second class can stand!" he shouted. "I hear that you intend to take your vacation to-morrow. Now, if I find one of you absent, I shall institute a punishment not soon forgotten. You can be seated;" and he laid upon the desk a ferule which Mollie said looked "like the stick grandmother stirred hasty pudding with."

Little Mollie thought it was cooler in the schoolroom at recess, and wisely kept her seat; but she received a few cuffs from the second class when school was dismissed.

"I shall write and tell you all about Berry Island," said Kate to Annie Foster, her intimate schoolmate; and with professions of never-dying friendship, such as only school-girls know

how to make, the two girls bade each other good-by.

"Father," said Kate that evening, "vacation does not commence until a week from to-morrow. Some of the girls seem like rebelling. It's in the air that Mr. Chase has threatened to punish every one who does not come."

"I must send him a note in the morning," replied Mr. Westburne.

The children were in high glee the next day.

"Only think, Kate, more than a month's vacation in which to swim and go fishing! I feel as if I was in heaven!" Whereupon Joe turned a somerset, which Tommy strove hard to match.

"But I cannot spend all my time on the water. I shall walk on the beach and pick up shells, watch the waves, and read to mamma," smilingly replied Kate.

Mr. Westburne had taken a furnished cottage. Nurse and Bridget went ahead at sunrise, consequently dinner was ready when the hungry ones reached the house, which was near the beach; and from its windows the waves could be seen breaking upon the shore.

After supper the children walked upon the beach with their father. Mrs. Westburne sat upon the veranda, watching the moon rise over the ocean.

"How wonderful, how mysterious, and how perfect are the works of God! That mild and silvery moon has power to control the tides of the mighty ocean. How calm and fair is the scene! The moon, the stars, and the grand old ocean glorify their Maker and do his will. All the works of His hands praise Him, but not man, for whose good and happiness He has made all things," thought Mrs. Westburne.

The children had their bath at six

Kate in a Petulant Mood

with their father, who later on taught Kate and Tommy to swim. Joe took to the water like a duck. Nothing delighted the boys more than to go with their father and the fishermen to catch lobsters and crabs, and boil them on the beach.

One beautiful day the three girls with their mother went to see "The old Hermit's cave." Tradition says that "when the cave was discovered, the skeleton of a man was found there, also some cooking utensils."

"See, mamma, what a nice seat for you in the shadow of the cave where you can see the waves dash over the rocks!" exclaimed Kate.

There had been a storm, and the roar of the ocean was terrific as the billows foamed and leaped upon the great rocks. Kate sat at her mother's feet, silently watching all.

"What is my little girl thinking

about?'' asked her mother, stroking the hair of the awe-struck child.

"I was thinking how great and mighty God is. Before the storm the sea was placid; the waves murmured so sweetly that I wanted them to kiss my feet, and I took off my boots and ran along the shore; and when I played in the sand, the sand birds came hopping and peeping, and turned their eyes to me, chirping a 'Peep, peep,' as if they must tell me how happy they were; but to-day the sea does not seem the same ocean. It fills me with strange wonder, and now the little peeps are afraid to come.''

"It is the voice of God, my child. He whispers his love in the restless waves, in the sweet songs of the birds, in the fragrant flowers, and in the sublime sunset. Indeed we love and enjoy these gifts, but seldom do we think of the Giver! Again, do we not

see His grandeur and His power in the moving waters, in the sudden fearful storm, and in the earthquake, all which make us fear. If we had that perfect love and trust in 'Our Heavenly Father,' why need we fear? You remember that little hymn, —

"'The curling waves with awful roar
A little boat assail'd,
And pallid Fear's distracting power
O'er all on board prevail'd,

Save one, the captain's darling child,
Who steadfast view'd the storm,
And cheerful with composure smil'd
At Danger's threatening form.

"Why sport'st thou thus?" a seaman
cried,
"While terrors overwhelm?"
"Why should I fear?" the boy replied,
"My Father's at the helm.'"

So when our worldly all is reft,
Our earthly helper gone,
We still have one true Anchor left;
God helps, and He alone.'

"My dear child," continued Mrs. Westburne, "give your heart early to God, for He has said, 'They who seek me early shall find me.' I feel that God will soon send His angel to summon me to my heavenly home, and I want you to remember all I say to you."

"Oh, mamma, I cannot live without you! Don't talk of leaving us!" and Kate laid her face in her mother's lap.

"God is good, and you must learn to submit to His will. He sends afflictions to draw us to Him. Those we love He takes to show us that this world is not our home; and He has said, 'When thy Father and Mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up.'"

Ruth and Alice returned, and Kate

Good Night

lifted her tearful eyes to her mother's face to see if there was any warning of the dreaded sign. The same earnest light shone in the clear brown eyes, but the cheeks were a little paler. Both girls knew now the meaning of their mother's conversation, and so they silently gathered together their books and shawls, and as silently walked homeward.

It was not a fashionable beach that Mr. Westburne had chosen for his family. A large farm-house stood near the cottage: its owner sold butter, milk, and eggs, and took in a few summer boarders.

Sometimes families would come and pitch their tents, to enjoy fishing and camp-life for a few days. Barberries grew in abundance, and this abundance gave the place the name of Berry Island.

Kate did not forget her promise to Annie Foster, who one day received

the following letter, which we will listen to, as Annie reads it to her mother:

BERRY ISLAND, Aug. 20, 18—.

My Darling Annie,—

If mamma were well, and you were here, I should be perfectly happy. I gathered a basketful of shells for you. Nurse, Tommy, and I have picked a lot of berries to preserve. Yesterday papa took us for a sail, during which the boys and I fished. Sometimes I caught two fishes at once, but I couldn't take them from the hook. Next day we had some fried for breakfast.

Last evening at sunset I sat upon the rocks with father, mother, and my sisters. I love to watch the ocean; it fascinates me. Every day I see a new charm in it. When the water is calm, and the little waves are chasing each other along the shore in the sunshine,

L. of C.

the scene seems like God's smile. Now and then I sing and paddle in the little waves. But when the billows roar and lash the rocks in their fury, then I see and feel God's power, and I cannot sing.

Mamma has a wheel-chair, and every pleasant day we wheel her along the shore; and we often meet the boarders, who live in a dear old farm-house. They always bow and smile, and seem such nice people.

I have a little room all my own. It has one window, from which I can see the ocean.

I can't think of any more to write. Remember me to the girls. I send you a great hug and much love.

Your affectionate school-mate,

KATE WESTBURNE.

One day Mr. Westburne, Kate, and the boys went to see the wreck of a

vessel, which had been driven upon the sandbar during a great storm the year before. Three of the sailors were found dead, with their bodies lashed to the mast. They were from the West India island where the vessel had been for her cargo. The bodies were buried on Berry Island under the shadow of an immense rock. Some one had carved upon the face of the rock these lines: —

" Days, months, years, and ages shall circle away,
And still the vast waters around thee shall roll:
Earth loses thy pattern, forever and aye —
Oh sailor boy! sailor boy! peace to thy soul."

A few days before leaving the island, the boys went again to visit the sailors' graves. Joe dug up a large barberry bush, and planted it by the side of the

rock, where in after years its sweet blossoms sent forth their fragrance.

It was the first of October when the family returned to the town. The bracing sea-breezes had invigorated the invalid for awhile; and the children were, as Nurse said, "as brown as gypsies."

THE PICNIC OVER THE RIVER

" This fond attachment to the well-known
place
Where first we started into life's long
race
Maintains its hold with such unfailing
sway,
We feel it e'en in age, and at our latest
day."

CHAPTER V.

THE PICNIC OVER THE RIVER.

WHAT New England man or woman does not remember the joy with which those half holidays, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, were hailed? How we would watch the hands of the clock until they reached the noon hour!

The eye will moisten and the heart grow young again as we think of our happy school days. How one yearns

to be a child again, to see the bygone faces that used to brighten that dearest spot on earth, "our childhood home."

It was on one of those half-holidays, toward the end of October, that Kate Westburne and Annie Foster were making dolls' dresses in the play-room in the garret. A pleasant place it was, with large windows, through which the sun shone.

"What a lovely view there is from this window! If I were you I should sleep here," said Annie.

"It is so lonesome," said Kate, "to sleep here alone; when it grows dark, that big chimney and those old spinning-wheels in the corner make shadows on the wall. I am afraid to go to bed. Papa says the old wheels once belonged to his grandmother. Sometimes we hear a noise, and Joe says, 'Tis the ghost of papa's grandmother spinning. The garret is

haunted.' Ruth says, 'It is not; 'tis the rats.'"

"What are those white objects on the hill among those tall oak-trees?"

"That is the new cemetery. You can view it well from mamma's window. Papa has bought a lot by the side of Mr. Morse's. Do you see those two trees alone on the top of the hill? Well, it is there."

"Look at those kites; how high they fly over the hill!" said Annie.

"Oh! it is Joe and Tommy: they are drawing them down. Don't let those boys see you, Annie, for they will be up here plaguing us. See the shadow of the chimney on the wall. Did I ever tell you how mamma was frightened at her shadow when she was a school-girl?"

"No. Oh, do tell me!" replied Annie.

"Well," continued Kate, "mamma

never had any brothers and only one sister, older than she, aunt Martha, who married a number of years before mamma. Uncle Nathan's farm was about three miles from grandpapa's, and half a mile from Pembroke Academy; there mamma lived with aunty while she attended the academy, and grandpapa called every Saturday afternoon, and took her to the academy Monday morning. One Saturday at sunset mamma decided to walk until she met grandpapa. It was a lonely road. After walking about a mile she came to the old graveyard; and, as she passed it, she fancied she caught sight of something appearing on the side by the high wall. She moved fast, but the object moved just as fast. Then she walked slow, and that object appeared to do the same. She was dreadfully frightened, so much so that when she had reached the turn in the road,

prior to going through the woods she vowed she would take the other road and bolt into Mr. Moody's house; but upon turning the corner, all she saw was her own shadow leaving the wall and coming in front of her; and then mamma sat on a rock and had a good laugh. She was glad enough when she heard the welcome sound of grandpapa's buggy."

"What's that? Didn't you hear a noise?" said Annie.

"I do believe it's a bat," replied Kate.

"No: sounds like a groan. And oh, look at that shadow moving behind the chimney!"

The girls ran, screaming, down the stairs, and Joe came behind them laughing.

"So you were afraid of my shadow?"

"You bad boy! you might have frightened us into fits."

"But I came to ask you and Annie

if you wanted to go on the hill and fly the kites,'' said Joe coaxingly. ''Tommy and I are going to shoot at a target.''

''No, indeed: you would be wicked enough to make us your target. We're going to mamma's room right away.''

Mrs. Westburne's chamber was over the sitting-room. It had four windows,— one in front of the house, two at the side, and a bay-window at the back. Through these windows the sun shone, as soon as it arose in the east until it set in the west. Between the two side windows appeared a large fireplace, and in the bay-window stood a small table with a few pots of choice plants which bloomed in the winter. On the inside of the room, opposite the fireplace, reposed a wide, low bedstead with crimson curtains. In one corner rested an organ, on which Mrs.

THE PICNIC

Westburne often played at twilight. A book-case, a writing-desk, and a work-table, with four or five low, easy chairs, completed the furniture of the room. The crimson carpet and window curtains gave it a most comfortable look. The children thought it the sweetest and dearest room in the house, for in this room they were born and nursed.

Mrs. Westburne sat in her arm-chair by the west window. The book of David's Psalms in large print lay open upon her lap. Nurse Ashby was sewing by the work-table.

"Why is it, Kate, that your aprons have such large holes in them? This one is almost new, and see what a long slit it has."

"I'll tell you, Nurse. If we converse in the deaf and dumb alphabet with our fingers, or laugh, or even turn around in school, Chase calls

us to him, pins our aprons over our faces, and stands us in a corner. I can't breathe, so with my teeth I make a hole in my apron for my nose.''

I don't wear aprons; and he stands me in a corner with my face to the wall, or puts me under his desk. He wants us to keep as still as mice,'' said Annie.

"I wonder what will be more tiresome in our lives than our school-days?'' asked Kate.

"Oh Kate! if you live to womanhood, you will have sorrows and cares; then you will look back upon these school-days as the happiest time of your life, and wish you were a little girl again. You will think of this dear old chamber, and yearn for the loved ones who have long since gone to the spirit-land. Then will these departed days be sweet in your mem-

ory,'' exclaimed Mrs. Westburne sadly.

"I believe it, dear mamma,'' said Kate, tenderly kissing her mother.

"Where are you, Kate?'' shouted Joe, coming from the stable one Wednesday morning before school-time.

"Here I am. What do you want, Joe?'' asked Kate, with her head out of the window.

"Sam is going to give Tommy and me a sail over the river this afternoon. He is going to get some clams. Don't you want to go, and invite two or three of your mates? We'll make a clam-chowder in the woods. Sam makes fine chowders.''

"Oh, won't that be jolly! I'll invite Annie Foster and May Wilson. Whom will you invite, Joe?''

"Dick Hill and Bob Wells.''

"Oh Joe? Bob Wells uses bad words at every little thing!" exclaimed Kate.

"Well, he wants to go so much, that before he gets into the boat you can make him promise not to say a naughty word," replied Joe.

"Father says I can go with Sam and you, Joe," said Kate joyfully after dinner. "And Bridget has put all we need for the chowder into the big pot; and two big apple pies, some cheese, and a lot of doughnuts in this basket with the biscuits."

"Oh Bridget, you are a brick!" exclaimed Joe, as the good-natured girl put some soup plates, tin cups, and kitchen spoons and knives into a basket, and covered the whole with a large, colored table-cloth.

"Ye can put the cloth over the sand and leaves, whin ye sit on the ground, and eat yer chowder like a pack av wild gypsies," laughed Bridget

THE PICNIC

It was a lovely afternoon. Sam and the boys were waiting in the boat at the wharf when Kate and her mates arrived. Bob Wells looked at the girls askant, as he was seldom invited to their parties. He was a strong, intelligent boy, of about Joe's age.

"Now, Bob, you must promise not to use strong expressions; and if you break your promise, you will either forfeit your chowder, or walk home over the bridge, which you know is three miles," said Kate.

"All right, Kate, I promise not to say a single bad word."

The party soon reached the opposite shore. Sam went for the clams, while the boys cut two stout limbs, each with two prongs. These they drove into the ground, and, cutting from a tree another strong limb, hung it, with the chowder-pot, between the prongs over the dried leaves and twigs which

Tommy and Dick had gathered for the fire.

Kate and Annie peeled the potatoes and onions. May Wilson was frying the slices of salt pork for the chowder when Sam arrived with the clams and a tin pail of water.

"Here are the salt and pepper, but where is the milk?" asked Sam when the chowder was nearly done.

"Bridget must have forgotten it, or put it all into this jug of coffee," replied Kate.

"There are some cows over there in the field!" exclaimed Bob, seizing the tin pail. "I'll go and milk enough for the chowder!" and away Bob ran for the cow.

"Go to the farm-house, and buy some milk. That cow will kick you over!" shouted Sam.

But Bob was determined to try the experiment. The cow stopped eating,

turned her head, and, seeing a stranger stealing her milk, she lifted her foot, kicked the pail over, and Bob found himself sprawling upon the ground with a bump on his forehead.

"Darn that blamed cow!" shouted Bob, as he limped to the river to bathe his forehead.

"Oh Bob! Bob! you have broken your promise!" cried Kate.

"I couldn't help it; 'twas in me, and had to come out," grumbled Bob.

Joe picked up the pail and ran to the farmer, who stood in the yard laughing heartily at Bob's mishap. He gave Joe a pail of milk, and Sam finished making the chowder. Annie spread the cloth upon the ground. May cut the pies and arranged the dessert. Kate put the coffee over the coals to warm, while Sam and Joe were dishing up the chowder.

"Come, Bob, chowder and supper are ready," shouted Dick.

"He is ashamed to come. Poor boy!" said May.

"Hurry up, Bob, and don't make me come after you," said Kate.

Bob picked himself up, and came with a doleful face.

"What are you going to have, Bob, chowder, and walk home, or no chowder, and sail home?" asked Sam, laughing.

"Chowder, and walk home," grumbled Bob.

"That's where you're wise, Bob. You must be faint and hungry after such a kick," laughed Joe.

"I think Bob has been punished enough!" exclaimed Tommy, looking at Bob's sad face, "and I motion to forgive him."

"I second the motion. If the cow hadn't kicked, Bob wouldn't have sworn," added Dick.

"And if Bob had done as I told him to do, the cow wouldn't have kicked him," laughed Sam.

"Oh, hang the cow!" growled Bob.

"Well, you shall go home in the boat; but you won't try to steal a cow's milk again, will you, Bob?"

"No, I'll be hanged if I do, Kate," replied Bob in a cheerful voice.

The chowder and dessert soon vanished into the hungry stomachs.

Sam gathered the dishes and stored them away in the boat, while the boys and girls went to some butternut trees, and filled their basket and a large bag with the nuts, which the good-natured farmer gave them.

The moon was shining and the sun was setting as the party started for home.

"Just the night for music on the water!" exclaimed Joe, taking a large jew's-harp from his pocket; and, put-

ting it between his teeth, he played "America," which the girls sang; and Bob, who was an expert whistler, kept in tune with them.

"I never had such a good time in my life, Kate; but I sha'n't forget that cow very soon," said Bob, as they were all bidding each other good-night.

"Neither shall I. You made a good picture for a comic almanac," laughed Kate.

CHRISTMAS

"Sing of glory to God and good will to men;
The dark night has ended, and dawn has begun;
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!"

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTMAS.

THANKSGIVING Day had come and gone. The chilly winds, the leafless trees, the faded flowers, and the frosty nights, told that the old year was dying.

It was a cool, sunny afternoon a few days before Christmas. A bright wood fire was burning in the wide fireplace. Kate was writing and Nurse was sewing in the pleasant chamber. Mrs.

Westburne sat in her arm-chair. She was looking sadly upon the fading landscape. A few months before all nature was full of life and joy, but now how changed! Although the scene was cheerless, yet there was sublimity in the thought that after "life's fitful dream is o'er," we shall bask in the light of God's love through endless ages, — like the chrysalis of the silkworm that involves itself in its silken case, and rests after its task is finished, until it shall burst from its cell a beautiful butterfly to bask in the summer sunshine. Fit emblem of the immortality of the soul!

"I have finished my letter to cousin Lucy, mamma, and left a page for you," said Kate.

"Well, dear, I will write a few lines to aunt Martha after supper."

CHRISTMAS

OLDBURY, Dec. 20th, 18—.

My Dearest Sister, —

How glad I should be if I could write that I am gaining in strength, for the sake of my dear family. I shall stay at home this winter in my comfortable chamber, where I have passed so many happy hours.

Yesterday was a lovely day. Edward came home early, and took me to ride in the country. As we were passing the new cemetery I begged him to stop. We left the carriage at the entrance, and passed through the lofty arch. It looked like a beautiful garden, but for a few scattered grave-stones and monuments. It gives me a melancholy pleasure to think that my body will rest within sight of my dear ones; but I am making you sad, and will change the subject.

You write that if Nathan goes West you will visit us. It would give us

great pleasure to have you pass the winter with us. I am very glad that mother and father are so well. Tell father I often long to hear one of his good sermons, and mother that I will write her a long letter soon. The children grow like weeds, and are so strong and healthy that it does me good to look at them. Love to all.

Ever your affectionate,

SISTER RUTH.

"This year we will have a jolly Christmas," said Joe to Kate and Tommy as they were helping Ruth and Alice trim the large parlor with evergreen.

"That tree is a perfect beauty, and when it is trimmed with the lights and presents it will look splendid," said Alice, stopping to admire the Christmas-tree, which stood in a small tub in the center of the room.

"Let me help you arrange it. I have real good taste for a boy," said Joe.

"I know you have. You'll be tasting all the candies until there are none left. Thank you, Joe, but Ruth and I can arrange it without any help."

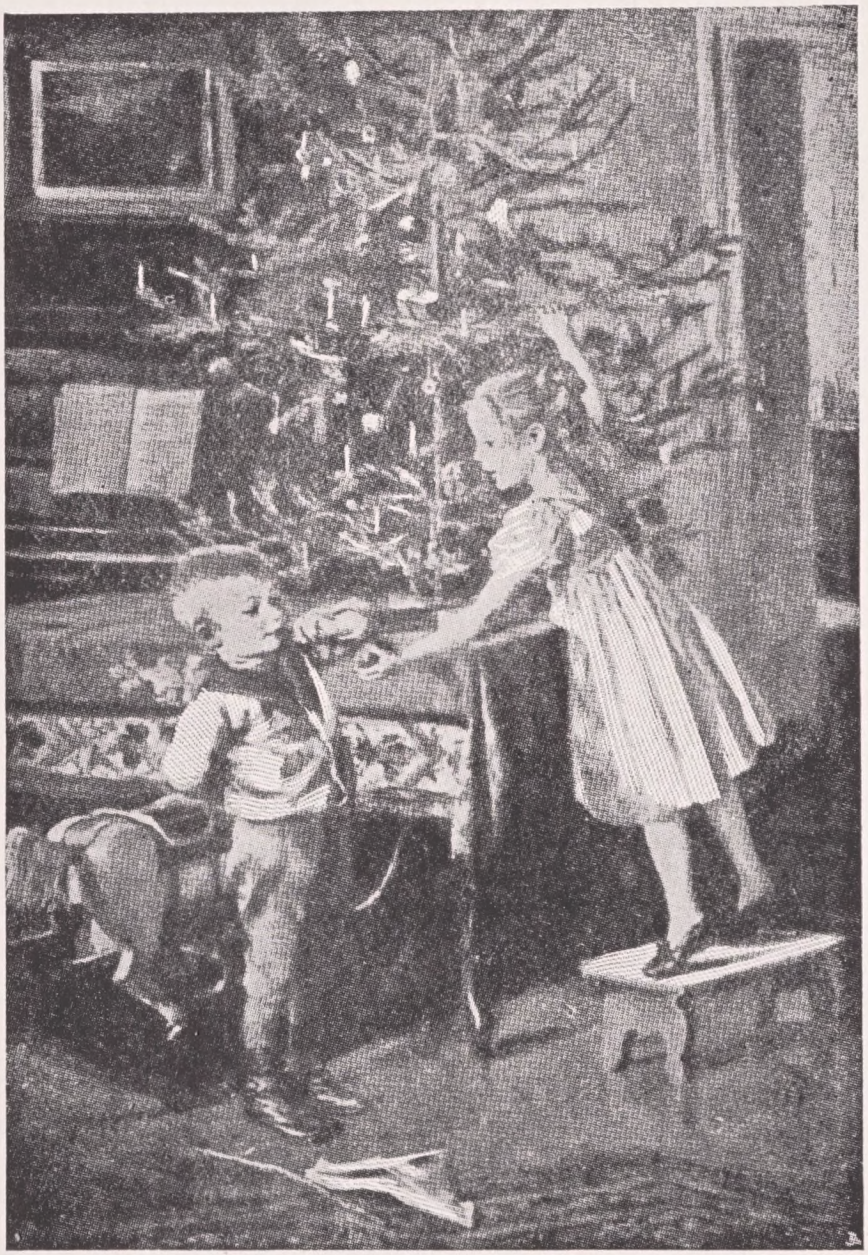
"Last Christmas was dull enough. when father and mother were in Florida," said Ruth.

"But we went to uncle George's. I'm sure we had a good time. Don't you remember the fun we had in the evening, pulling molasses candy?" asked Alice.

"Yes; but I enjoy Christmas better at home with father and mother."

"I can enjoy it anywhere when there is plenty of fun and enough to eat," said Joe.

"What do you think Santa Claus will put into our stockings to-night?" asked Tommy.



The Christmas Tree

"What he knows we need. I shall hang up one of father's stockings. It will hold more than mine."

"Oh you avaricious boy, it would serve you right if you didn't get anything, Joe!" exclaimed Kate.

"Where shall we hang our stockings!" asked Tommy.

"By the fireplace in mamma's chamber."

"How can Santa Claus come down the chimney when mamma has a fire all night?"

"Oh, I suppose the old fellow will put on his fire-proof clothes. Take a peep to-night through the key-hole about ten o'clock, Tommy, and you will see Santa Claus. That's the way I found him out. Curiosity often enlightens the mind," laughed Joe.

Tommy lay awake a long time that night, thinking of Joe's words, and how Santa Claus must look.

"Is he a grisly old fellow?" he asked at last.

"Who?" muttered Joe, half asleep.

"Santa Claus."

"When you hear the clock strike ten, wake me, and we'll go and see him."

Tommy listened while Joe snored. Soon the clock struck ten.

"Joe! Joe! wake!" whispered Tommy, pushing him.

"What do you want?" grumbled Joe in a very sleepy tone of voice.

"'Tis ten o'clock. You said you would show me Santa Claus."

"Come on, then," mumbled back the brother, slowly creeping out of bed half asleep. "Light the lamp, and leave it upon the table. We must go in the dark, so the old fellow won't see us."

The two boys groped their way through the long, dark hall; and, as they were passing the stairway, they saw

Nurse Ashby ascending the stairs with a light. This abrupt, unthought of possibility unsettled their wits. Running back, Joe in his fright struck against an angle in the wall, and Tommy fell over the stand made of porcelain which held his father's walking-sticks. When they reached their room, Tommy's nose was in a sad condition, and Joe had to soothe a large bump on his forehead with cold water and a sponge. Tommy looked at Joe's bumps, and dolefully asked, —

"Where is Santa Claus?"

"Stop your fooling, you juvenile monkey. If it hadn't been for you, this wouldn't have happened. See what I've got by your morbid curiosity!"

"But you said to-day that a proper amount of curiosity enlightened the mind," continued Tommy, fairly laughing now.

"I'll enlighten you with my shoe, if you don't stop teasing me!" And here

Joe, with a dignity worthy of a Roman senator, immediately wrapped a towel around his forehead, and as quickly bounded into bed.

Christmas dawned cold, bright, and frosty. Kate awoke at sunrise, and went softly to her mother's chamber to get her stocking, and jumped into her bed again to examine its contents, — a paper of candy, a pair of red mittens, a pair of red stockings, six handkerchiefs, a bottle of cologne, a cake of soap, a toothbrush, and a nailbrush.

Joe awoke with an imaginary headache, which caused him to despatch his henchman, Master Tom, for the stockings. These articles were both alike, matching Kate's, but instead of the cologne, appeared a woolen tippet tied around each stocking.

"Wish you all a 'Merry Christmas!'" greeted the children as they entered the cheerful breakfast-room.

"Fricasseed chickens, cold roast pork with baked potatoes, fried ham and eggs, topped off with toast and coffee. A breakfast fit for a president!" exclaimed Joe, surveying the table, and forgetting his headache.

"How did you get that bump on your forehead, Joe?"

"Struck it against the wall, Ruth."

Tommy giggled, and Joe gave him a savage look.

Soon after breakfast came a small crowd of cousins, also an uncle and aunt. It was too cold to play in the garret or out of doors, so Kate brought her dolls and playthings into the warm sitting-room, where the throng sat, some of them in the sunny window-seats, some telling stories, some sewing.

"What a glorious time the boys are having, making snow-men! See, they are going to knock them down with snow-balls!" exclaimed Carrie.

Ancestral Portraits

CHRISTMAS

It was a happy party that gathered around the Christmas dinner. How tender and brown were the great turkey and goose! The juicy roast-beef and all the vegetables were done to perfection. Then came the rich plum-pudding, pies, nuts and oranges.

After dinner they went into the sitting-room. At seven the Christmas-tree was lighted, the sight of which made the children wild with joy.

"It seems like Fairy-land!" shouted little Bessie Milton. "Oh papa, take me up, so I can see the top!" and Bessie leaped into her father's arms, while the other children formed a circle, and danced around the tree. When they were tired they all stood and guessed what was in the parcels which hung upon the boughs.

"I'm sure that little black doll is for me, because Ruth knows I like little darkies," said Amy.

"I think the trumpet is for John, and the drum for me," said Tommy.

"I'll be satisfied with that long whistle, the big top, and one of the bags of candies," said Joe, walking around the tree with his hands in his pockets.

"I wish you may get them! Don't you see everything has a little tag, on which is written the name of the one who is to have the present?" said Kate.

"I will teach you a nice game with the handkerchief. Let us play it while we are waiting for the presents!" exclaimed Carrie. "Come here, Kate. I must whisper it first to you. Now stand in the corner with your face to the wall. Take hold of one end of this handkerchief, and swing it with me, Tommy."

"How long do you swing it?" asked Joe.

Carrie gave the handkerchief to Joe.

"Who has the handkerchief?" asked Carrie.

"Joe," responded Kate.

"Yes! you peeped," said Joe.

"How could I, with my face to the wall! I put my face in mamma's lap."

Carrie threw the handkerchief behind her chair.

"Now, where is the handkerchief?"

"Behind Carrie's chair," responded Kate.

The children guessed everything but the right solution. After enjoying the game for some time, they gave it up.

"Now, where is the catch?" asked Alice.

"'Tis very simple. I told Kate that the first one who spoke should have the handkerchief. She would know the voice; and, if no one spoke, I would throw it behind my chair."

At last the bell rang for tea. After

tea Ruth and Alice distributed the presents. Then Ruth went to the piano, and all sang the words to the music.

" He calls us to come in, and share
The treasures of His kingdom there.
'Twas of Jehovah's crown the gem,
That holy star of Bethlehem.
The balsam is with Him alone
To whom all mortal woe is known.
There's healing in His garment's hem,
Who took our form at Bethlehem."

The clock struck eleven. The sleigh was at the door. Bessie and Amy were asleep; and the merry Christmas Day was ended.

NEW YEAR'S DAY — THE SLEIGH RIDE

"A happy New Year; and let the poor
Turn with a thankful heart from every door.
If in your heart there's strife with kin or friend,
For Jesus' sake let the contention end.
So ere the year is hidden 'neath its pall,
Thank we the Lord to be at peace with all."

CHAPTER VII.

NEW YEAR'S DAY — THE SLEIGH-RIDE.

A HEAVY snow-storm had fallen during the night, which was followed by a light rain that froze the snow up on the limbs of the trees and bushes, making them sparkle with ice crystals in the sunshine, on that New Year's morning when Nurse opened the curtains in Kate's chamber.

"Oh, Nurse, how late I've slept!" said she, lifting her curly head from

the pillow, and running to the window.

"Oh, the snow, the beautiful snow! How it glitters! How pure and lovely God has made the earth look on this New Year's Day, as if He wants to tell us to begin this new year to make our lives as pure and useful as He has made the earth; and I will try," said Kate.

"What else do you think came in the night, while you were asleep?" asked Nurse.

"Oh, I know, — aunty," replied Kate.

"Many Happy New Years to all of you!" greeted Kate, giving her aunt a hearty kiss as she took her seat at the breakfast-table. Sam went in the sleigh to bring Widow Shaw and Mary to dinner. Kate and Tommy dug a path around the house; and when their work was done they stopped to snow-

ball each other, and lie in the snow-banks, and pull each other up to see the impress of their little forms in the snow. Mother and aunty stood at the window, smiling at their rosy faces and childish glee.

"There's the sleigh-bells! let's run to the road, and ride back."

Little Mary wore the presents Kate sent her, — the pretty crimson hood and mittens, — and her face was the picture of happiness.

"Now, Sam," said Kate, after the Widow Shaw had gone into the house, "wait until I get my cloak, then give us a ride."

"Stop, Sam! I'm going," shouted Joe, running down the hill.

"It is such a lovely day, every one is taking a sleigh-ride. See how fast the snow is dropping from the twigs and bushes. I am sure the fairies worked all last night to give us a

glimpse of fairy-land this morning,'' said Mary, as they glided over the crusty snow.

"Why, there is little Winnie and Mike Barry, struggling through the snow! Stop, Sam!''

"Where are you going, Winnie?'' asked Kate.

"To the store, for taters.''

"Jump into the sleigh, and we'll take you there. Now cuddle down under the buffalo-robe.''

"What are you going to have for New Year's dinner, Mike?'' asked Tommy.

"Taters and turkey-stuffing.''

"Turkey-stuffing! but where's the turkey?'' asked Joe.

"Pa has been sick three weeks, and it took so much money for the doctor's medicine, that ma said we couldn't have turkey; but she has sage and all the other things to make the stuffing.''

"And ma said it would smell, and perhaps taste, like turkey," added Winnie.

"Smell and taste like turkey! oh my! oh my! I shall burst!" and Joe roared with laughter, in which Tommy joined.

"Drive to the market, Sam. They shall have a turkey for the stuffing. Now, who wants to have a hand in this good time on New Year's Day?" asked Kate.

"I do!" shouted Tommy.

"It is a worthy object, and I'll help it. You can put me down for a bushel of potatoes," said Joe, scratching his head. "Ma said, 'Tell the man to send half a peck,'" shouted little Mike under the buffalo-robe.

"Kate," whispered Mary, "I have brought you a basket of apples, — they are in the sleigh-box, — and I want to be in the good time. Can I give half the apples to the children?"

"Oh, yes, Mary! it is just the thing for the dessert," said Kate, clapping her hands.

Sam found a plump, tender turkey, and the man put a bushel of potatoes into a large bag. Sam contributed a dozen sweet oranges to the feast.

"You pay the bill, Sam, and we'll pay you," said Joe.

"All right! I'll trust you," replied Sam.

"Hallo! there's Jim Murray's bake-cart on runners, and Jim is on it," shouted Tommy.

"Hold up, Sam! We'll get something there. — Wish you a happy New Year, Mr. Murray. Will you give a couple of loaves of bread for Mike Barry's dinner? Mike has been ill three weeks," said Kate.

"To be sure I will; and here are a couple of cranberry pies to go with the bread; and may Mike have good luck

the New Year! He's a hard-working, honest man, is Mike Barry."

Mike and Winnie popped up their little heads from under the buffalo-robe, and looked with longing eyes at the pies and bread, as Joe put them in the sleigh-box with the turkey and the rest of the dinner.

"And what have you there under the buffalo, — Mike's two kids, giving them a sleigh-ride? Well, well! may the good Lord protect you, and give you many happy New Years!"

"The same to you, Mr. Murray," replied Kate, as they glided over the crusty snow.

"I wonder if they have wood and coal?" asked Sam, as they were speeding homeward.

"Pa bought a load of wood and two tons of coal before he took sick; and ma said that was one great comfort, that we would not be cold," replied Winnie.

Mike was at the window, and Mrs. Barry was at the door, as the sleigh drove up to the cottage.

"Oh, where are my poor little bairns?" cried Mrs. Barry, wringing her hands.

"Here they are, safe and sound," replied Kate, jumping out of the sleigh, and helping little Mike and Winnie to alight. Joe carried the turkey into the house, and laid it upon the table before the astonished Mike.

"Now, Mrs. Barry, I guess you and I can carry in the potatoes, and Kate, Mary, and Tommy will bring in the dessert."

"Oh, ma, we'll have turkey with the stuffing now!" cried the children, clapping their hands as they danced around the table, that was loaded with the New Year's dinner.

"Me man Mike tuk sick wid a bad cold an' fever, but the doctor says he

can go to wark the next week,'' said Mrs. Barry.

"Faith, Norah, the sight o' this New Year's feast has put new life an' strength in mesilf already; an' may the Lord and the Mother av God bless yer swate sowls!''

"An' give ye many happy New Years, an' make ye all saints in Hiven,'' added Mrs. Barry, as the little party entered the sleigh.

"Pa, are they some of the angels that God sends to the world on New Year's Day to see what the poor children want?'' asked little Mike.

"And told them that we wanted a turkey?'' added Winnie.

"I have faith it must be so, Mikey. To be sure, they are God's blessed angels on earth,'' replied Mrs. Barry, preparing the turkey for the ready-made stuffing.

We are going to make molasses candy in the kitchen this evening,'' whispered Kate to Mary, as they assembled in the warm sitting-room after dinner, where Joe told the story of Winnie and Mike Barry's New Year's dinner of potatoes and turkey-stuffing.

"Did you enjoy giving to the dinner, Tommy?'' asked Ruth.

"You bet I did! I never felt so good in my life.''

"And I felt big, and happy too, when I saw Mike's pale, thin face, and how glad and astonished he looked when I stood the bag of potatoes in the corner of the room. I've got the money that I earned last summer helping Sam in the garden, and it's more than enough to pay for the potatoes,'' said Joe.

"So have I,'' said Tommy. "Kate and I pay for the turkey.''

"I say, Kate, why can't we find a

needy family every New Year's Day, and buy their dinner? ''

"I second the motion," cried Tommy.

"I wish I could help," said Mary to her grandmother.

"You can, my dear. You shall make a cheese, and give a basket of apples. Where there is a will, there is a way; and our Heavenly Father will help those who help others."

"Of course we must have Mary in the good time," said Kate.

At last silence stole over the group. The murmur of the children's voices died away as they watched the fading sunlight of that short winter day.

The moon was shedding its silvery light through the windows as Bridget entered with the lamp.

"Let us go and crack the nuts, and pop the corn for the corn-balls," said Joe.

"Is the kitchen ready for the children, Bridget?" asked Nurse.

"Faith, an' it's the pot an' 'lasses that's ready for the children."

"Oh Biddy, you're a trump!" shouted Joe, as they ran to the kitchen.

The molasses was soon boiling. Joe stirred it, while Tommy and Mary cracked the nuts, and Kate popped the corn.

"Aisy! Aisy!" cried Bridget, as Joe was stirring the molasses with great force.

Nurse took some of the boiling molasses, and made a plateful of corn-balls; while Kate stirred walnuts and almonds into some candy, turned it into a flat dish, and set it away to cool. The children put on long aprons, and washed and buttered their hands; then each one took a portion of candy, and pulled and worked it until it became a rich golden color; part they braided,

part they twisted, and cut into sticks; then it was put on a flat dish, and laid in the snow to be hard and brittle. Kate carried a plateful into the sitting-room, where it was eaten and praised, which delighted the children.

The next morning Joe came to the breakfast table with a very sober face.

"What is the matter? Has the molasses candy taken away your appetite?" asked his father.

"No. The holidays are over, and I don't know one of my lessons," grumbled the boy, "Barnes will be savage. He always is after holidays, especially if he has been living high. It makes him cross and gouty."

"He can't be worse than Chase. I would like to take some molasses candy to school, to treat my mates; but he knows, as soon as he looks at us, if we have had anything. He has smellers like a cat. I can study better if I have

something to chew. I wish I had a stomach like a cow, where I could hide my cuds,'' muttered Kate.

''Joe, you have no excuse for not knowing your lessons,'' said his father, preparing to go to his office.

'' Come, Kate, get into the box-sled, and I'll draw you to school. Get in, Tommy: there's room,'' said Joe; and he put the cord of the sled over his shoulders and under his arms.

''Now, Joe, don't slue the sled when you turn the corners, and throw us out,'' said Kate. And they started off, shouting in high glee.

''Wait, and I'll come for you at noon, Kate,'' said Joe, stopping at the gate of the play-ground.

Kate took her satchel of books, and ran up the steps. As she entered the schoolroom the girls were standing around the stove, waiting for the master.

"Oh, Kate!" cried May Wilson, "did you have a good time in the holidays?"

"Splendid! last night we made molasses candy. I've brought a stick for each of you, so eat it before Chase comes."

May Wilson took her station at the window, to give the signal when the master came in sight.

"It's half-past nine; I think Chase must have gone on a buss last night, and over-slept this morning," said Emma Carey.

"What's a buss?" asked Hattie Gage.

"Why, a kissing party," replied Emma.

"Christopher Columbus! how on earth could he kiss any one with that bushy mustache and beard! why, it is half a foot from his ferocious beard to his mouth," said May Wilson.

"That's true! All you can see of his face is his nose and eyes, and they serve him well (to see and to smell)," responded Nellie Talbot, putting the last of her candy into her mouth.

"Here comes Chase, with a vengeance. My gracious! His head will get here before his heels," said May, as they all scampered to their seats.

"Did you get a flogging, Joe?" asked Mr. Westburne at dinner time, looking at Joe's cross face. Tommy began to laugh.

"Now giggle! you deserved it as much as I did," grumbled Joe.

"What was it!" asked aunt Martha. "Didn't you know your lessons?"

"'Twasn't that. Barnes left his desk unlocked, and Bob Wells took a box of cayenne pepper that he puts on the boys' tongues when they say bad words; and when Bob saw Barnes

coming, he turned it on the top of the stove. Barnes leaned over the stove to warm himself, and the pepper went into his nose and eyes. It made him sneeze and blow his nose like fury, and he flogged all of us because we wouldn't tell who did it. Tommy and some more little cowards ran out of the schoolroom when Barnes came in, and they looked in through the window.''

"I wasn't going to stay in the room and get a flogging, when I could save my shins and see the fun outside. Jupiter! Didn't you all dance a jig when Barnes put that whip about your legs? Oh Father, 'twas a jolly show!'' and Tommy burst into a hearty laugh.

"I hope you may get it sometime, and dance more than I did,'' said Joe.

"Come, boys, no more words. Eat your dinner, or the school-bell will ring

before you have finished," said Mr. Westburne.

"Father, can't the boys and I go on the pond to skate after school?" asked Kate. "The girls say the ice is hard enough. We will keep near the edge."

"No: wait until next week; and if this cold snap continues, you can go then."

It was a bitter cold day toward the end of February. The sun was hidden behind leaden clouds; it was too cold to snow. Ruth and Alice were practicing a duet on the piano, while Mrs. Westburne and her sister sat by the fire in the cozy chamber. The sisters talked long and fervently of girlhood days, recalling many forgotten episodes.

"As soon as summer comes, I shall go to Glenfield," said Mrs. Westburne. "I want to see the dear old home and visit the places of my childhood once

more. I should have gone last summer, but Edward thought the sea-air would be better for me."

"I am sure the country air among your native hills will do you more good than all the doctor's medicine," replied her sister.

"I shall take Kate with me."

"Let her go with me next month. Mother and the children will be delighted to see her."

"She has never been away from home. I am afraid she will be homesick, Martha."

"I think not. She was saying yesterday that she would like to go, and Lucy begged me to bring her. She could go to the village Academy with Lucy, and there would be enough to do to keep her from being homesick."

"I will see what Edward says ;— but how late the children are coming home ! It is nearly sunset."

"They have gone skating on the pond. I heard Joe tell Kate to take her skates," said Nurse Ashby.

"Those children will be frozen if they stay out of doors much longer. 'Tis the coldest day we've had this year," said Alice, coming into the room. "But here they come, thrashing their arms to keep warm."

"Oh Biddy, give us something to eat and be quick about it, or I'll eat you! I'm as hungry as a wolf," shouted Joe.

"An' can't ye wait a bit for the tay?"

"Well, hurry it up, then; and, Biddy, don't forget plenty of meat and fried potatoes; tay won't reach the hungry spot."

The boys pulled off their fur caps, coats, and mittens, and ran after Kate to their mother's room.

"Well, children, you must be very cold?" said Mrs. Westburne.

Grandmamma Hale

"No, mother, we're as warm as toast; for the boys made a rousing fire on the pond, and we had a fine time skating; — and mother," continued Tommy "you should have seen Kate skate. She flew over the ice like a bird."

"That's because she is light and little," replied Joe.

"Glad I am little, so long as I feel as big as anybody; and I'm growing. Besides, mother said the other day, that the best goods came out of little bundles. Didn't you, mother?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Westburne, smiling.

KATE'S VISIT IN THE COUNTRY — THE INDIANS' GRAVES

"The forest seems to listen for the rustle
of the leaves,
And the very skies to glisten in the hope
of summer eves ;
The cattle lift their voices from the val-
leys and the hills,
And the feather'd race rejoices with a
gush of tuneful bills ;
And if this cloudless arch fills the poet's
song with glee,
Oh thou changing month of March, be
it dedicate to thee."

CHAPTER VIII.

KATE'S VISIT IN THE COUNTRY. — THE INDIANS' GRAVES.

THE windy month of March had come, and with it came uncle Nathan. It was decided that Kate should go with her uncle and aunt to Glenfield, and they were to start in a few days. It was Wednesday afternoon, and she had been with her sisters to buy some articles she would need in the country.

"Look, mamma, at my pretty writing-desk, and such large paper with envelopes to match. The large paper I shall use when I write to you; for I shall write a little every day, so it will be a very long letter. The small paper will do to answer my schoolmates' letters; and look at these little packages of ink powder, so many pens, and such a beautiful penholder, and this rubber to erase ink when I make a mistake. These skipping-cords and balls I bought for cousins Lucy and Mattie."

"Reach me that package upon the table, Kate."

"Oh, what a lovely work-box! Is it for me, mamma?"

"Yes. You know how to use your needle very well, and you will find everything you need in the box. I am sure you will never go with a hole in your stocking, or a rent in your dress."

"Indeed I will not. I shall not

have dear Nurse to keep me tidy," said Kate, with a quiver in her voice; "and if I don't know how to mend my clothes nicely, aunty will teach me. What a pretty thimble, with my name on it; and so many spools of cotton; and what a parcel of needles, and what cunning little scissors! Do you think I shall be as happy when I am a woman as I am now, mamma?"

"You will always be happy as long as your thoughts and acts are pure and noble."

"You will be awful homesick without Tommy and me to play with, Kate," said Joe, the day before the journey. "I'll give you my new kite; it will be fun flying it in the fields."

"That's so," said Tommy; "and you may have my best bow and arrows. You'll find plenty of squirrels to shoot in the woods."

"By jingo! If it wasn't so far, I'd

walk up there every Saturday afternoon," said Joe.

"Well, boys, I shall miss you dreadfully; but I will send you a letter with mamma's; and papa has promised to take you, if you are good boys, when he comes for mamma and me in the autumn."

The next morning Kate had no appetite for breakfast. "I want to see grandpapa and grandmamma, Lucy and Mattie, but I am sorry to leave you," said she with the tears in her eyes.

"Oh, you are a brave little girl, so cheer up. There is Sam at the door with the carriage," said her father.

"Here is a little basket of sandwiches, doughnuts, cheese, and cold chicken. You will be hungry on the road," said Nurse.

Tommy was wiping his tears with the back of his hand, while Joe was winking to keep his from coming.

"Good-bye, me honey," cried Bridget, wiping away a tear with the corner of her apron.

"Don't forget to write as soon as you can," said Ruth, as Kate kissed them all.

"You will find a little Testament in your trunk. I have marked some passages for you to read," said her mother tenderly kissing her at the carriage door.

Katie looked back as they turned the corner of the lane. There stood the dear ones, waving a last adieu.

The carriage soon arrived at the station, where they took the stage; and Kate forgot her parting in watching the strange faces around her. It was late in the afternoon when they entered the city of Manchester, where they exchanged the stage for the cars.

The bright crimson clouds in the west showed where the sun had disap-

peared, and darkness was stealing over hill and dale. Now and then a twinkling star appeared in the clear sky, and Kate thought of home. Were they thinking of her, and would they miss her? "I am sure mamma will, for this is the hour I always sat upon my little chair by her side, and watched the evening star, while she told me a Bible story."

"You are tired, dear," said uncle Nathan, drawing her to him. "Try to sleep a little while, for we have a long way to ride after we leave the cars;" and, resting her head against her uncle's broad chest, Kate slept.

"Dear child, how cheerful she has been all day! I have been amused watching her. I don't think anything has escaped her notice," said her aunt.

"Ten minutes of nine," said uncle Nathan, looking at his watch.

"The cars go very slow, on account of the freshet. The water is over the

track in many places," replied the conductor, as he was taking the tickets.

"Here we are at last."

Kate opened her eyes, and asked, in a bewildered tone, "Where am I?"

"Almost home, dear," said aunt Martha; and in a few moments they were in the sleigh, which was waiting for them at the station.

Kate was again nestled in her uncle's arms, but now she was wide awake. The moon was shining brightly through the tall pine trees as they rode through the forest; but soon they emerged into the open country, where here and there the snow lay in patches, looking dreary in the moonlight. Lights were seen shining through the windows of the scattered farm-houses.

"Do you see those two lights on the hill? That is our home," said aunt Martha.

"Is it very far?"

"About one mile," replied her uncle.

"We shall soon be there. Then you shall have a warm supper and a soft bed, and we are tired enough to enjoy them," said aunt Martha.

"I don't see the lights now."

"That is because we are going around the hill. You will see them soon. — Home again," said her aunt, as John drove up to a fine old brick farm-house. A bright wood fire was burning in the fire-place, giving a cheerful look to the large dining-room.

"Well, I'm glad we've got home safe and sound."

"Ah! how'd ye do?" said Hannah, a middle-aged woman, coming into the room where Kate stood gazing at the glowing fire. "I guess ye must be hungry, ain't ye?"

"Let us have supper, Hannah," said uncle Nathan, coming into the room.

"It is all ready and waiting, sir;" and Hannah darted out of the room, returning with a tray, upon which were a juicy beef-steak, fricasseed chicken, and smoking potatoes.

"Come, Kate, drink a glass of this warm milk, then you shall go to bed. Lucy and Mattie will be home in the morning," said aunt Martha.

"Where are they?" asked Kate.

"They are at their aunt Emily's. Come and see how you like your room. It is by the side of mine, so you won't be lonely. That is Lucy's bed, and this is yours. Little Mattie sleeps in my room."

"It is very pretty," said Kate, looking around the large, pleasant room, with its warm carpet and bright furniture.

"Here is your trunk in this corner. You will hear the bell when it is time to dress in the morning."

The warm beams of the morning sun were shining through the windows when Kate awoke. Soon the bell rang, and, jumping up, she dressed herself quickly. "How good that coffee smells!" said she, as the savory odor stole to her nostrils. She heard her cousins inquiring for her, then a timid knock at the door.

"Come in," said Kate.

Lucy and Mattie entered, exclaiming, "I am so glad you have come! we'll have such fine times."

After breakfast they went to see the brook of "Sweet Waters." "There it is, sparkling and murmuring among the bushes and rocks," said Lucy.

"Oh, how lovely! so full of little water-falls!" exclaimed Kate.

"Let us follow it over the hill until we reach the fountain, where grandpapa made a little arbor with seats," said Lucy. "Did you ever see snake-

root growing ?'' she continued, as she pulled up long roots of it by the side of the stream. "You see the leaves are shaped like a snake's head ; that is why it is called snakeroot. And by and by the water-cresses will be growing by the side of the brook.

"Do you see that forest of big trees, yonder ? Well, those are slippery-elm trees. The men cut off the outside bark, then they peel off the inside bark (which is tender and elastic) as far as they can. Then they throw it up to a man who is in the tree, and he strips it up, until it reaches the limbs ; then they cut it off.

"All those bushes by the stone wall are witch-hazel. The doctors call it hamamelis."

"Oh, what a big hole in this tree ! and the top has blown off ! " said Kate.

"Papa's men cut it off last October to get the wild honey. They had to

cover their faces with fine netting, and their hands with leather gloves. John said the comb and honey weighed eighty-six pounds. Hannah melted the wax, and put the honey into jars ; but John left enough for the bees to live upon through the winter."

"But what a lot of hollow-trees!" exclaimed Kate.

"We call them honey trees, or bee-hive trees," answered Lucy. "Here we are at the fountain of the brook. See how the water gushes out of the rocks under the hillock. Take the dipper, and drink some of it, Kate."

"What a queer taste, so cold and sweet !"

"Father says that an Indian doctor told his grandfather that the white man did not know what virtue there was in this water," said Lucy. "But look, Kate. The sun is almost overhead, and we must be going toward home."

"What's that horrible noise?" asked Kate, in alarm.

"That's Hannah blowing the horn for the men to come to dinner," said Lucy, laughing.

After dinner they went to visit the Indians' graveyard on the bank of the Connecticut River, which flowed on the opposite side of the road in front of the house. Lucy opened a big gate, and they entered a large field, where the warm sun was melting away the few patches of snow, and the new spring grass was beginning to start from the soil. The mounds of the Indians' graves were between two clusters of trees, which seemed to have grown from the roots of the old trees.

"Look, Lucy, how green the grass is on the mounds!" said Kate.

"It is always green here before it is anywhere else; and, Kate, when I put flowers upon the mounds in our

graveyard, I always remember the poor Indians' graves. See!" and Lucy pointed to the dried bunches of flowers which had lain under the winter's snow.

"Oh, let us sit upon the rocks, and look at the waves as they dash over that little island in the middle of the river!" said Kate. "What place is that, where the church and those white houses are, the other side of the river?"

"That is Rivertown. It is in Vermont," answered Lucy "Look, Kate, how lovely is the 'Hill of Sweet Waters' in the sunshine! And how glad the poor Indians' hearts were when they saw 'Home Hill' from the river, as they returned at sunset after fishing and hunting! I think the white men were very cruel to the Indians. I am glad my forefathers were not. Let us go under the bars into the 'Cook Lot.' You see these holes filled

with stones? They were the ovens where the Indians cooked their food. Father calls it the 'Cook Lot,' and he puts the sheep here in the summer. I will ask father to tell you the story of the last Indian family, who are buried in the graves under the beech-tree.''

UNCLE NATHAN'S STORY.

"A form passed before me, — a vision of one
Who mourned for his nation, his country, and kin.
He walked on the shore, now deserted and lone,
Where the home of his tribe in their glory had been."

My ancestors bought this land from a remnant of the Pennacook tribe, who were the most peaceable and intelligent of all the New England tribes of Indians, and whose wigwams were scattered

on the bank of the river. About the time my grandfather married, there were only two Indians — Lancet and his squaw Tamoo — living in a wigwam in the field. Lancet helped grandfather on the farm, and Tamoo helped grandmother in the house.

One day, when my father was a few days old, Tamoo brought her little boy, a week old, for my grandmother to give him an English name. So Tamoo's baby was baptized with the name of David, and my father was named Nathan; and the little lads were taught to read, write, and cipher in the school-house which stands by the road to-day.

The God of the pale-face was their God; and every Sunday, Lancet, Tamoo, and little Dave, dressed in their best clothes, would go in their canoe to church in Rivertown.

Nothing gave Lancet more pleasure

than taking the two boys in his canoe, to spear the great salmon and shad which were then found in the Connecticut River, for there were no dashing wheels to frightened away the fish. Nature's God had given the waters of these rivers as a highway for the swarming fish to advance and increase for the support of the red man. Tamoo sometimes went with them, and then they would hunt in the forest, and bring home game; but with the English civilization, the schools of fish and the tribes of red men have become extinct from the rivers and the shores.

Lancet, Tamoo, and little Dave lived and ate in my grandfather's house, but slept in their wigwam. One Christmas Day, when Dave was twelve years old, Tamoo and he went to church in Rivertown. On returning home, they went too near Rock Island, where there is always a strong current,

and, the ice being thin, they broke through, but managed to climb upon the rocks. Lancet and my father heard their shouts, and paddled the canoe to the island, and took them off; but they were wet to the skin, and were ill for many days. Tamoo's cold settled in the lung-fever. She died, and was buried under the beech-tree.

Little Dave would sit by his mother's grave and mourn for hours, and sometimes fall asleep with his head resting upon the mound. Lancet and my father tried to divert his thoughts; and they would spend the summer days with him in the canoe, fishing, or paddling up and down the beautiful river. He followed his father wherever he went, as if afraid of losing him also; and his constant cry was, "I want my mother." Both Lancet and Dave slept in the chamber where Tamoo died, and where, when the

autumn leaves were dying, little Dave died also.

After the death of Dave, life had no charm for Lancet. He nevermore paddled his canoe upon the placid Connecticut; but he would walk to and fro upon its shores, gazing sadly at the two graves under the beech-tree.

One afternoon my father found him sitting in his canoe, which was upon the shore. He was looking mournfully around him. "I have been a friend to the white man, and he has been my friend. His God is my God. My kindred are gone. I shall go to them, but they will never come to me," said Lancet. He gave his canoe, his bow, arrows, and fishing-rods to my father; and was buried by the side of little Dave. There is nothing left to remind us to-day of the Indian but the names of some of the mountains and rivers, and a few scattered graves;

and this is what is termed the progress of civilization, — killing the original inhabitants of a country, and taking their possessions.

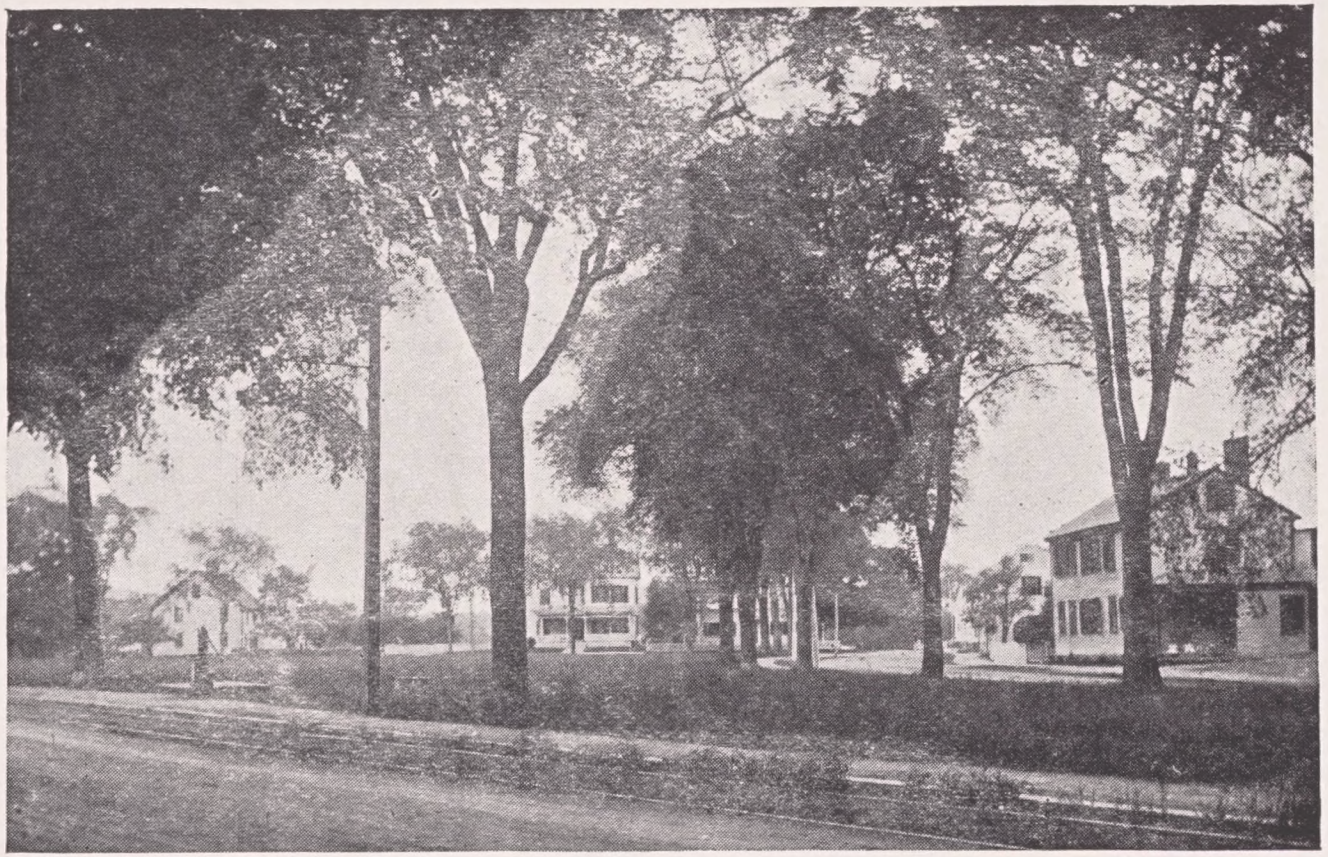
KATE AND THE OLD HOME

"A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change his place."

CHAPTER IX.

KATE AND THE OLD HOME.

MRS. WESTBURNE'S father was a clergyman, the Rev. Samuel Hale, greatly beloved and respected. He married the daughter of a wealthy farmer in the village of Glenfield, and for forty years had preached the word of God. His flock, even to the lambs, oh how tenderly they were cared for in his day! Gently



Where Grandpapa Lived

he led them into the fold! With what joy they listened to his pure and holy teachings! How clearly he showed them that they were related to God as children to a father, and that the divine spirit would flow into their hearts so far as they sought its power, and yielded to its influence? He had stood by bedsides as souls passed beyond wrapped in the blessed hope of the righteous. The little children ran to meet the good man, and covered his hands with kisses, while he made their hearts glad with his smiles and caresses.

In his early days other churches had offered him a larger stipend and a more conspicuous place in the world, but he was not ambitious for this world's goods or praise. His work and heart were with the people of his first choice. There were all his dearest earthly ties.

"We will not have time to go to

father's until after the sermon, for the church-bell is ringing,'' said aunt Martha, as they drew near the village.

"Now look, Kate. We are on the high-road, and grandfather's house is in the valley,'' said Lucy. "There it is, — that white one with green blinds, and piazza around the front. In the summer it is almost hidden by those large elm-trees; and when the grass is green on the lawn, it is lovely.''

"Do you see the orchard this side of the house? Some of the trees have two and three different kinds of apples, and there are pears and peaches; and nice fruit it is. Grandpapa doesn't let anything grow on his farm that isn't good.''

"What a long hill! Is that the hill where the brooklets run over the stones?'' asked Kate.

"Yes. It is the pasture where the cows feed; and at sunset they go down

that narrow lane to the bars, and wait until Caleb lets them out. The other side of the wall is a field, and in summer there are delicious strawberries in the grass. Yonder is the graveyard, and there's the church on the common."

Many carriages were in the stalls behind the church, and the people were seated when the family entered the pew behind the minister's.

"Grandmamma is not here," whispered Lucy,

The organ ceased playing, and Kate looked anxiously at the pulpit as the white-haired pastor arose. A smile lighted the deep, earnest eyes as he looked down upon the uplifted faces of his grandchildren.

"Mother's eyes are just like his," thought Kate, "and I know I shall love him dearly. I must remember the text, and what I can of the sermon, to write to mamma."

The prayer was offered, the hymn sung, and all eyes were fixed upon the face of the pastor as his deep voice pronounced the text, "Revelation, Twenty-second chapter, seventeenth verse." He spoke of the love of God, and the glory of Heaven as seen by St. John in his Revelation. He told how anxious God was that all should enjoy that beautiful world. "Almost the last words of this Revelation," said the pastor, "are God's spirit, and the Church of God pleading with man to come and drink the waters of life, and live. Oh my dear people, is there an object which our Heavenly Father has made which does not delight the eye and gladden the heart? Then, if His works are so perfect in this sinful world, what imagination can picture that land where the splendor of God's countenance is the light therein, where there shall be no parting, no sin, no death!

Is it not worth striving for, worth resisting the false and fleeting pleasures of the world?

"The sun of my earthly life is setting. I am gently gliding down the stream; and sweet foretaste of that peace with God I have to cheer me on. Soon I shall see the Holy City, the New Jesusalem. I expect to meet many of my dear ones there. And shall I see you in that beautiful world?

"Let us live the Christ's life, and commune daily with our Divine Father as our Saviour did while here on earth."

These were some of the words of her grandfather's sermon that made an impression on Kate's mind. She watched him as he descended from the pulpit, and thought she had never seen a face so peaceful and heavenly.

"So this is my little granddaughter," he said, taking Kate upon his knee as they rode home.

"How is mother? She was not at church," asked Aunt Martha.

"She went this morning, but complained of a headache. I left her resting upon the lounge."

"What a long, wide hall!" thought Kate, as they went to the end of it, where a glass door looked into the garden. The sitting-room door was open; and grandmamma sat in a large arm-chair, covered with bright-colored chintz.

"Well, this is a pleasant surprise," said she to Aunt Martha. "When did you come home? And how is my Ruth?"

"Here is a letter from Ruth. She comes in July."

Grandmamma folded Kate in her arms.

"You must stay with me. I want you to read to me, as your mother used to."

"And what shall I do, grandma?" asked Lucy.

"You can come and visit her when you want to; and when her mother comes, she can make you a longer visit."

So it was arranged that Lucy and Mattie should spend Saturday with Kate. She stood on the piazza, waving her handkerchief at Lucy as the carriage passed along the high-road over the hill. When they disappeared from sight, she returned to the sitting-room. A fire was burning in the fire-place; and grandmamma said, "A bright fire upon the hearth-stone is always cheerful company.

"Come here, Kate, and I will show you some pictures, and tell you their history," said her grandfather, entering the room with a large volume. Kate had heard her mother tell some of the stories, but the pictures were new to her.

The sun had sunk behind the distant blue hills, and they sat in the twilight on that blessed Sabbath evening, gazing at the bright clouds.

"How bright the stars shine! and there is my star, brighter than all the rest," said Kate, pointing to the evening star.

"Your mother, when a little girl, would often stand at this window, and watch for the stars. She would say that God was lighting his lamps and opening the gates of heaven to send out his angels to guard His children while they slept."

Nancy entered with a light, and spread the cloth upon the little round table. How delicious was the raspberry jam, the bread and butter, with the slices of cold ham! After tea grandfather finished showing Kate the pictures. Then came the evening hymn, —

"I love to steal a while away,
From every cumbering care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer."

The clock struck nine. Nancy and Caleb entered the room, and grandpapa read a chapter, and offered the evening prayer. The good-night kiss was given, and Nancy showed Kate her chamber. After closing the shutters she was left alone. She looked around the large room, at the high-posted bedstead with its snow-white dimity curtains, the old-fashioned, high-backed chairs, and the home-made carpet. A little wood fire was burning in the fireplace. As she began to undress, a feeling of home-sickness came over her. The slow ticking of the old eight-day clock in the hall, and the mournful sound of the wind as it blew around the corner of the house, made her feel

lonely. She missed Lucy's company; and she thought of her cozy little room by the side of her mother's, and she yearned to see the dear ones at home.

"To-morrow I will finish my letter to mamma," said Kate, as she brushed away the tears; and, climbing into the soft feather bed, she was soon asleep.

The old clock in the hall was slowly striking seven when Kate opened her eyes the next morning.

"What pretty wall-paper!" she thought. "I wonder if this was mamma's room when she was a little girl. I would like to know where that door at the foot of my bed goes."

She jumped up, and, after dressing herself, she opened the door.

"Oh, what a nice room! I'll ask grandmamma to let me have it. What pretty blue chintz curtains and low chairs! and the bed is just high enough for me. I shall fall out of the other

some night, and get a bump. Here is a bureau for my white clothes, and a closet for my dresses. This little table will do to write upon, and upon this shelf I can put my work-box. The other room will do for mamma.''

She opened another door in the room. There was a little entry, with the back-stairs ; and another door, which she supposed opened into her grandfather's study, as she heard his voice within.

"Did you sleep well?'' asked grandmamma at the breakfast table.

"Yes, Grandmamma. — Was that mamma's room when she was a little girl ? ''

"No, my dear. After breakfast I will show you your mother's room; and if you like it, Nancy shall make the bed so you can sleep there to-night.''

"Is it the room with the blue

chintz curtains and wide window-seats ? ''

" Yes. How do you like it ? ''

" Very much. I was going to ask you to let me sleep there, grandmamma.''

The warm days of spring had come, and Nature was putting on her robe of green. The frogs were croaking in the brook, and the birds were chirping to their mates on the boughs of the trees in the orchard, where they were building their nests. It was Saturday afternoon, and Kate, Lucy, and Mattie were returning from the woods, where they had been to gather spring flowers. As they were going home, they met their grandfather riding slowly up the hill.

" Oh grandfather! where are you going ? '' asked Lucy.

" To visit an old blind lady.''

"Can we go with you?"

"Yes, my children, I would like to have you;" and the girls scrambled into the carriage.

"Are those the White Mountains that look so blue in the distance?" asked Kate.

"No. Those are the Ascutney Mountains. They are in Vermont, and are named after a tribe of Indians who at one time lived around the base of the mountains."

"How did the Indians come to this country? I thought the first human beings were born in Asia," said Lucy.

"That question has often been asked. Indians are supposed to be of Asiatic origin, and may have crossed Bering Strait, which separates Asia from Alaska."

They had arrived at Mrs. Lane's cottage. The children sat by the win-

dow while their grandfather read a chapter in the Bible, and they knelt when he prayed for the old blind lady.

Tears filled the sightless eyes as the words of that heartfelt prayer touched her heart; and in a broken but sweet voice she sang a verse of the hymn,—

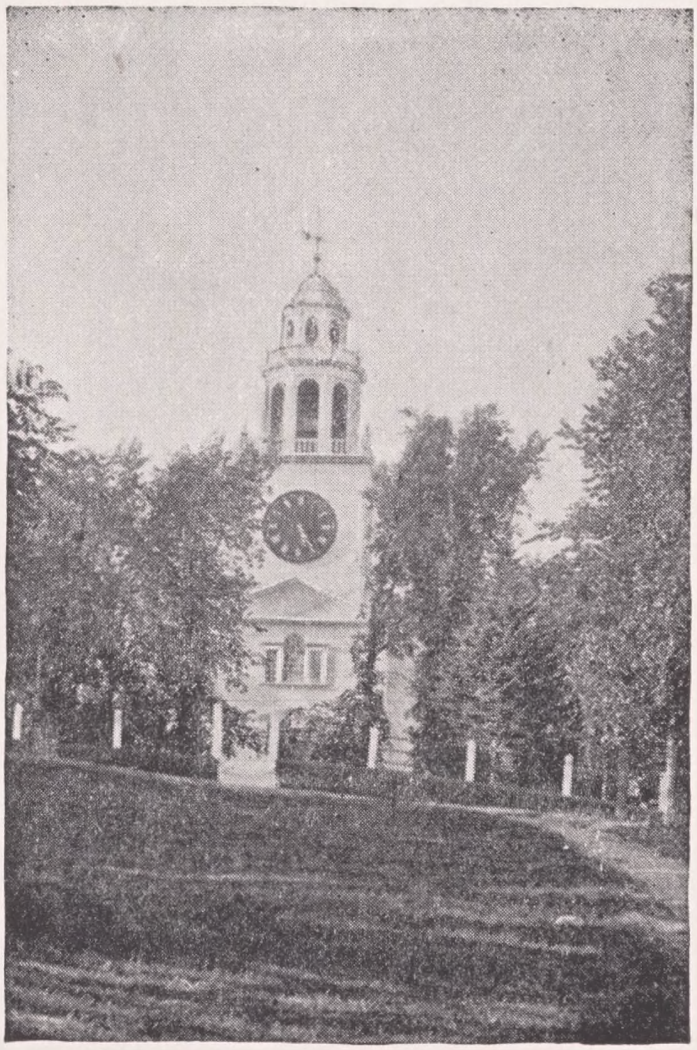
"*How sweet the name of Jesus sounds*
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

"Your visits always do me good, my dear pastor. My affliction has brought me nearer God. He has given me more than He has taken away, and He cheers my soul with glimpses of Heaven. It is only a little while, when I shall see Him face to face;" and a sweet smile lighted the thin, pale features.

Caleb's Horses

"Has Mrs. Lane always been blind, grandpapa?" asked Kate, as they rode home.

"No, my child. Erysipelas destroyed her sight a few years ago."



LETTERS FROM KATE

" Write soon ! Oh sweet request of Truth!
How tenderly its accents come !
We heard it first in early youth,
When mothers watched us leaving home."

CHAPTER X.

LETTERS FROM KATE.

IT was Wednesday afternoon. The gray clouds hung low, and the rain pattered against the window where Joe and Tommy stood with doleful faces, waiting for the rain to cease.

"We can't go fishing to-day, that's sure," said Joe.

"Look, Joe; there's a bit of blue sky!"

"Not enough for a patch on a sailor's jacket," grumbled Joe.

"Hallo! there's the postman!" and Tommy ran to the door. Mrs. Westburne was resting, as Tommy, followed by Joe, entered her chamber.

"Mamma, letters from Glenfield, and one from Kate," cried Tommy.

With tearful eyes the mother read the following, while the two boys listened in breathless silence.

DEAR MAMMA, — I have been at grandpapa's house two weeks last Sunday. The first night I was a little homesick; but I've not been so since, for grandmamma is so kind and gentle. Grandpapa often takes me to ride or walk. He is very lively, and not a bit grave, only when he is in the pulpit. Grandpapa says the religion of Christ makes the heart glad. He says "My dear" to grandma, and kisses her

when he goes out, just as papa does you.

"Now, mamma, I can see you smile, and you think that I am too observing. I think grandma must have been very pretty when she was young, she is such a nice-looking old lady. I have your room, and sleep in the same bed you slept in when you were a child. I sit on the window-seat, where you used to sit, and read ; but I like best the west window. That little pond in the meadow, the woodland, and the top of the White Mountains in the distance, are lovely ; and, mamma, when I think that this was your home, where you were born, and passed your happy childhood, and that you love it as well as I love my dear home, it seems more dear and lovely, because I imagine how you looked when a little girl, running over the rocks on the hill, playing in the pleasant chamber, or

listening to the birds singing in the apple-trees in the orchard.

The first Sunday I came here, I heard grandpapa preach on this text, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come." He said that God was loath to close the Bible without pleading once more with man. The sermon was so plain that any child could have understood it. I am sure there is not another little girl in the world who has better teaching and example given her than I have.

I like to hear grandmamma talk about you. Yesterday she showed me some little white dresses and caps you used to wear. They were yellow with age. The cradle and crib, in which you and aunty used to sleep, are in a corner of the garret.

Grandmamma says she likes to look at them once in a while, for they remind her of the time when you and

aunty were little children, and it brings back the spring-time of her happy married life.

Dear Mamma, I think of you every day. Tell papa I send him a great hug and a kiss; also the girls and dear Nurse.

Please write soon.

Your little KATE.

DEAR JOE AND TOMMY,— You can't think how pretty it is here! Grandpapa has a great barnful of hay, and I climb the loft to look for hens' eggs. I wish you were here to enjoy the fun with me.

By the side of the house is a large orchard; and some of the trees are very old, with their branches so low I can sit on them. Won't it be fun in the summer to swing on the boughs and eat the apples?

This morning I went with grandpapa

to see the river. It was full of big logs, and many men were on them, pushing them along. One of the men gave me a lot of spruce-gum. Grandpapa says the logs go to Manchester and other cities, and are sawed into spruce boards.

When the snow melts on the mountains in the spring, there is always a freshet, and the water surrounds many houses on the low land.

If you see any of my mates give them my love.

Now be good boys, and write to me.

Your loving sister,

KATE.

"If I see any of her mates!" cried Joe, breaking the silence. "Why, mother, if I have as many girls after me when I am a man as I've had since Kate went away, I'll lose my wits. Yesterday Annie Foster and

Hattie Gage held me by my coat-tail half an hour, saying they were dying to see Kate, sending their love, and all that sort of sweet thing. I began to wonder if they would send such professions of love to their absent husbands if they should ever marry; and to get rid of them, I asked them, and they scampered.''

''Not before Annie boxed your ears, Joe,'' said Tommy.

''It is so dull without Kate. She could always find some fun for us on rainy days,'' growled Joe.

''It is a good day to look at your garden-tools and seeds. You know papa promised to buy all the vegetables you could raise in your gardens,'' said their mother.

''Why didn't we think of that before? Next week we can begin to plant,'' said Joe, as they ran off to work in the tool-house.

"No school to-day, mother," cried Joe, as he and Tommy entered the sitting-room a few days after we left them in the tool-house; "so Tommy and I are going to dig our gardens."

"But why is there no school?" asked Mrs. Westburne.

"Some of the boys have filled the key-hole of the school-house with tar and gravel, and Master Barnes has got to have a locksmith to get inside to take the lock off. Little Jimmy Cole told the master that he was hiding behind a tree in the school-yard about sunset yesterday, and he saw Sam Davis and Bill Noyes do it. He said that one had a pot of tar, and the other a bag of gravel. I guess they did it, because I heard them say that they were going to give the scholars a vacation."

"And they have gone fishing. Bob Wells said he met them, and they wanted him to go with them, and

he told them he wouldn't," said Tommy.

A new lock was put on the school-house door, and the two boys were yet missing. The town crier rang his bell at the corners of the streets, and read a description of the boys.

"Two policemen were hiding in the school-house yard last night," said Tommy, a few days later. "Jack Talbert said he was going home, and he jumped over the school-yard fence to get into School Street, when one of the policemen grabbed him, and wouldn't let him go until he had him in Mr. Davis's store. He said he kicked and yelled, and never got such a fright in his life."

"Now, Tommy, don't you go roving round that school-yard after dark."

"They won't catch me there, Joe. Those big trees make it a pokerish place any time after dark," said Tommy.

"They have found Sam Davis and Bill Noyes," said Joe at dinner-time, about a week after the boys had disappeared. "Little Jack Davis said his father had a letter from the captain of his father's vessel, that was going to the West Indies. The boys hid on the vessel, and made their appearance as they were passing the Isles of Shoals."

"I have heard of it, Joe," said Mr. Westburne. "Mr. Davis told me that Mr. Noyes and he had written to Captain Brown to make them work their passage, and to give them sailors' fare."

"They wanted a vacation, and I guess they will get enough of it," laughed Joe.

It was Saturday, and Joe ate his dinner in silence. His face was pale and stern. It did not look like the sunny, lighted face of our Joe. Tommy was also quiet, and glanced askance at

Joe. Mr. Westburne noticed it, and after dinner he asked, —

"What has gone wrong to-day, Joe?"

"Ask Tommy, father. I can't tell you," replied Joe, as he went to work in his garden.

Mr. Westburne turned to Tommy for an explanation.

"You know, father, that little Cuban boy whom Captain Brown brought from the West Indies five or six years ago? Well, Dick Brown, as they call him, goes to our school, and he is a fine scholar; but Dave Todd is always abusing Dick, and calling him names, and Dave has also influenced some of the other boys to torment and frighten Dick. Joe always defends him, and sometimes he and Dave almost come to blows. Dick doesn't want, as he is afraid, to play with the boys, but he will follow Joe like a little dog.

"This forenoon Joe and Bob Wells were playing marbles, and Dick stood watching them. Dave Todd and some other boys were playing ball, and the ball went over the fence into the street.

"'Here, you little nigger slave, go and bring me that ball!' shouted Dave. Joe told Dick not to go.

"'Don't you hear, you black imp?' shouted Dave; and as Dick didn't go, Dave Todd strutted up to him, and knocked him down. Joe jumped at Dave, and with his fists laid him sprawling upon the ground; and the boys shouted, 'That serves him right!' and some of the boys ran for water, and wiped the blood from Dick's face with their handkerchiefs, and stood by him until his nose stopped bleeding; but they let Dave get his own water, and wipe his own face. Oh father, I never saw such a savage face on Joe

before ! He seemed a foot taller as he clinched his hands.''

''That is the old Revolutionary blood there,'' said Mr. Westburne smiling, as he looked at his wife.

'' Master Barnes came to the window, and saw the boys' noses bleeding,'' continued Tommy; ''and after recess, he asked Dave Todd what the fighting was about. Dave wouldn't answer. Then he asked Dick; and after he told him, Master Barnes said Joe had done what was right, but Dave had done a mean, cowardly act, and he told him to ask Dick's pardon; but Dick said,—

'' 'Oh master, I forgive him without his asking ! '

'' Master Barnes then said if Dave Todd or any of the boys abused Dick after this he would give them a cowhiding; and then he asked,—

'' 'Is there a boy in this room who would forgive an injury so readily as

Dick Brown has done? Is there a boy in his class who can go above him? Do not those bright, intelligent eyes, and every feature of Dick's face, with his forgiving spirit, prove to you that he has in him the making of a good man?'

"Dick thanked Master Barnes for his good opinion of him, and said he would try to be worthy of it.

"When school was out this noon, many of the boys gathered around Dick; and Bob Wells invited him to to come and see his den, where he keeps his kites, bows and arrows, stuffed birds, and butterflies. Dick said he would if he hadn't his chores and his Sunday-school lesson to learn for to-morrow; and, father, I believe, after this, Dick Brown will be the most popular boy in the school."

"Joe," said Mr. Westburne that evening, when the family had assembled in the sitting-room, "I wish you to

tell the school-boys that Dick's father was a Spanish nobleman, Count de Guevára. Dick's mother died soon after Dick, or Richardo de Guevára, was born; and his father died about five years ago, when Dick was seven years old. The boy inherits his father's title, also a large estate in the suburbs of Havana; and much of the cargo that Captain Brown brings from Havana comes from Dick's plantation.

"The Count de Guevára and the captain were warm friends; and the count wanted his boy educated in this country, and appointed Captain Brown as Dick's guardian."

"Dick didn't tell Master Barnes that Dave Todd called him a nigger slave," said Tommy.

"Has Captain Brown any children, father?" asked Joe.

"No, Joe; and the captain says his wife idolizes Dick. He is a noble little

fellow, and I want you and Tommy to protect him from rude boys.''

"Is that the Spanish boy who comes to church with Mrs. Brown? He is a very pretty boy,'' said Ruth.

"That's so; and he is in my Sunday-school class, and all the boys in the class like him; and,'' continued Tommy, "he hasn't got wooly hair, nor thick lips, and his skin is not much darker than Dave Todd's. There is no negro blood in him.''

"And if there were, he would be just as good as you or I, Tommy,'' said Joe.

"I know that, Joe. I can love a negro boy just as well as a white boy.''

"It is the inner goodness shining out in the person we love and not his outward body.''

"That is very true, Joe, my dear boy,'' replied Mrs. Westburne.

"Dave Todd says that all the people

in the Southern States, and in Cuba, are either slave-holders or slaves,'' said Tommy. ''And as Dick is a boy, I suppose he thinks he must have been a slave.''

''Dick's father left slaves on his plantation,'' said Mr. Westburne, ''and when Dick takes possession of the estate he may liberate them.''

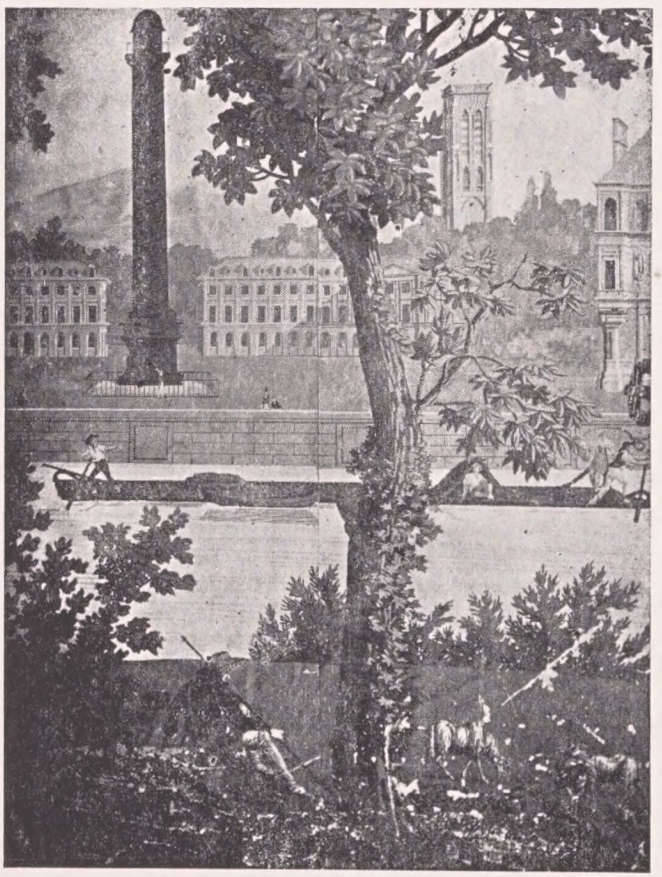
''And I am sure he will, father. He says he wants to go to West Point to be a soldier,'' said Tommy.

''Oh, father! the men who made that 'Address to the King in 1774' were very selfish men; for while they were fighting against their bondage with England, they were holding the black man in slavery of the worst kind, — buying and selling the man, his wife and children, as they did their cattle; and when I saw those savage hounds of the slave-drivers last spring, coming through our town hunting for

those poor slaves, as they would wild beasts, I felt then as I did when I knocked Dave Todd down."

"Did they get the slaves?" asked Tommy.

"Thank God, no!" said Mr. Westburne. "Some good Christian men in Boston helped them through to Canada."



MRS. WESTBURNE'S LAST VISIT TO THE OLD HOME

"There is a spot on earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.
Here woman reigns ; the mother, daughter, wife,
Strew with fresh flowers the narrow way of life."

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. WESTBURNE'S LAST VISIT TO THE OLD HOME.

IT was a lovely morning in June. The sun had not dried the dew on the flowers when Kate entered the dining-room with glowing cheeks, holding the corners of her apron, which was full of roses and lilacs.

"Look, grandmamma! what beautiful half-blown roses! I found them

on the bushes by the old well in the field.''

"Yes, dear. Your mother was fond of those roses. What are you going to do with them?''

"Put them in the vases in mamma's chamber, and they will open in the water.''

Kate ran lightly up stairs, where we will follow her.

The feather-bed on the high, curtained bedstead had been removed, and in its place was a hair mattress. The white dimity curtains and counterpane gave it a cool and restful look. The fireplace was decked with evergreen, and on the mantle-piece were the vases in which Kate arranged the roses.

"I hope that mamma will come to-day,'' said she at the breakfast-table. "Do you think she will, grandpapa?''

The Little Red School-House

"Your father wrote that we might expect them this week, so we shall look for them every day."

Kate was reading by the window in her chamber when she heard the rumbling of the stage-coach in the distance. She ran down stairs, and opened the front door ; but the driver snapped his whip, and bowed to the little figure on the piazza, that was looking so longingly at the old stage.

"Mamma will not come to-day. The stage has just gone by," murmured Kate, as she entered the dining-room, where her grandmother was sealing strawberry-jam.

"Your mother will not come in the stage. Perhaps she will come this evening, or remain in the city, and come in a coach to-morrow," replied her grandmother.

Kate went back to her room to finish the story she was reading, and sat in

the gathering twilight, listening to the twittering of the birds which had built their nests in the apple-trees.

It was as grandmamma had said. Mr. Westburne and his wife arrived in the city, where they remained a few hours. It was nearly sunset when a coach might have been seen on a stretch of country road two or three miles from Glenfield. Mrs. Westburne was reclining on her traveling-shawls. She was thinner and paler than when we last saw her. A dry, hacking cough disturbed her rest now and then. Mr. Westburne looked anxious. There was a sadness about the eyes and mouth of his pleasant face.

"We must be nearly there," said Mrs. Westburne, rising, and looking out of the window.

"Yes. There is the poor-farm under

the hill ; it is not more than a mile from father's now.''

The pale face lighted up, and tears filled her eyes, as she looked once more upon the scenery of her girlhood. How her heart throbs, as she recalls the buried memories of that home ! Nearly twenty years since, she left it a lovely bride, with what hope and love ! and how happy had been her wedded life ! Now she was returning to take a last fond look.

Yonder is the hill, where in childhood she gamboled over the rocks. The old well-sweep, with its moss-covered bucket, still stands in the field, like a specter of the past; and behind the elm-trees is the dear old home, where every room is holy in its associations; while on the piazza in the deepening twilight wait the loving father, mother, and child. They hear the sound of the carriage, and they

watch. So will that dear one soon, oh! how soon, wait, and watch, and beckon for them in the spirit-land.

Early the next morning Kate went softly to her mother's chamber, and found her sleeping. She was startled when she saw the change a few months had made in that dear face, so thin, so white; and she felt for the first time that her mother was passing away.

"How can I live without my mother?" she mourned; and, throwing herself upon her bed, she wept bitterly at the thought of her first great sorrow.

"I must not let mamma see that I've been crying," said she; and after bathing her flushed face, she went down stairs to the kitchen.

"Oh, Nancy! please to give me the little basket. I want to go on the

hill and pick some strawberries for mamma's breakfast.''

As she leaped across the brook in the little lane which led up the hill to the field where the ripe berries were hid in the tall grass, she saw her father walking near the old well, with a bunch of wild flowers in his hand.

"Oh papa, come with me, and see what large, delicious strawberries I have kept for you and mamma!''

"Why, how stout and rosy my little girl has grown!'' said her father. "What does grandma give you to eat that makes you grow so?''

"Oh! brown bread and milk, fresh eggs, and all the good things which grow on the farm. Papa, don't you think the country air will make mamma well again?''

"I hope so, my dear. To-morrow I go home, and you must do all you can to make mamma happy. I shall

return in October, and bring the boys with me."

It was difficult for Mrs. Westburne to make her parents believe that this would be her last visit; but as they heard the dry cough, and saw the hectic flush upon the wan cheeks, they reluctantly gave up the hope they had clung to.

"I think I will visit uncle Ralph to-day," said Mrs. Westburne one morning after breakfast.

"I am going with your father to visit Mrs. Lane. She is failing very fast. Nancy," continued she, "after Caleb has eaten his breakfast tell him to harness the horse to the carryall. He can leave us at Mrs. Lane's while you and Kate go to see Uncle Ralph."

This uncle Kate had often seen at church, and she loved to gaze on his thoughtful face, with its long white

beard and flowing hair. She knew that in early life he had had some great sorrow.

Uncle Ralph lived in the farm-house in which he was born. It was a fine old place, with a large lawn shaded by maple-trees.

"Is not that uncle Ralph trimming the rose-bushes, mamma?"

"Yes, dear. Stop here, Caleb, and we will walk to the house."

Uncle Ralph was so busy cutting the roses, and talking to himself, that he did not observe his visitors until Mrs. Westburne laid her hand upon his arm.

"Good-morning, uncle Ralph. — Don't you know me?" continued she, seeing his bewildered look. "I am your niece, Ruth Hale; and this is my daughter Kate."

He gazed at them with a sad smile, then extended his hand.

"My niece! Oh, yes, I remember. You were not so old as your little girl when I lost my Mary, my happiness, my all. These were the roses she loved so well. Come in and see her room."

They entered a large, sunny room, to which the rich, old-fashioned furniture gave a pleasing look.

"She loved this room," said uncle Ralph, as he arranged the roses in a large vase upon the piano. "That is her work-stand, with her work, just as she left it thirty years ago;" and he pointed to a child's unfinished garment, yellow with age, which lay upon the stand. "Here I come and commune with Mary, morning, noon, and night. I think she sees me, because I feel her presence. In the still hours of night she comes to me in dreams, and this is all that is left to me of my lost happiness; but God

knows what is best, and what does it matter? We shall soon meet." And with a sad smile he murmured,—

"*Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,*
And fondly broods with miser care.
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear."

Then lifting his eyes to the portrait of a lovely girl which hung over the piano, he continued,—

"*My Mary, dear departed shade,*
Where is thy place of blissful rest?"

Overcome with his feelings, he sank upon a chair, while tears filled his eyes.

"You must excuse my weakness, Ruth; but to-day is the anniversary of Mary's death, and every year brings me nearer her blessed home. God has reconciled me to my loss, and now I can say, 'The Lord gave. He took.

He will restore. He doeth all things well.' But I will not make you sad any longer. Let us go and see if Mrs. Moulton will give us some lunch;" and he led the way to the dining-room.

"Mamma," said Kate, as they rode home, "will you please tell me how uncle Ralph lost his wife?"

"Not now, my child. It is a sad story, and I feel weary. I will tell you about it another day."

"*Down deep in his heart, in its calm sleep,*
A dear dead love lies buried deep.
He clasped it once in a long embrace,
Then closed the eyes, and veiled the face;
And dreams of the past, like roses, still shed
Their fragrance around his cherished dead;
While tears that ever are falling unseen,
Like soft summer rain, keep its memory green."

One afternoon, late in September, Mrs. Westburne was resting upon the lounge in Kate's chamber, while Kate sat at the window with an open book in her lap. Not a breath of air stirred the leaves on the old apple-tree in the orchard under the window, but once in a while the thump of an apple was heard falling from perfect ripeness.

The hum of the bees and the songs of the birds were as merry as ever, yet there was a sadness in the gleams among the shadows of the trees. Alas! every breath of wind, and every beam of sunshine, seemed to whisper that the pleasant summer days were gone.

And yet who does not love those sweet, genial days of autumn, when Nature pours out her blessings upon man, and the earth has yielded her rich and bounteous harvest? How depraved is the man who can enjoy the gifts of Nature, and not lift his soul

in love and gratitude to Nature's God! So thought Kate on that lovely afternoon.

Suddenly the tolling of the church-bell came over the hills in slow and solemn succession, each stroke sounding fainter through the still air before another broke upon the silence. It was tolling the age and burial of Mrs. Lane, who had gone to her long-wished-for home. As the echo of the last stroke ended, Mrs. Westburne arose, and slowly repeated these beautiful lines,—

> "*Happy soul, thy days are ended,*
> *All thy mourning days below.*
> *Go, by angel guards attended,*
> *To the sight of Jesus go.*"

Kate drew the arm-chair to the window for her mother.

"Here comes grandpa from the burial, and uncle Ralph is with him,"

she said. "Oh, mamma! you have never told me about uncle Ralph's sorrow."

"Then listen, my child, and learn how uncertain are earthly joys. It was thirty years ago last month since uncle Ralph met with an affliction which shadowed his life, but the blessed promises of Christ and the hope of meeting his loved one again was the balm which softened his grief. That portrait which hangs in your grandfather's study looks as my uncle Ralph Foster did when I first saw him. He is my mother's only brother; and it was in this house that he met my aunt Mary, your grandfather's youngest sister, a beautiful girl of eighteen years. Uncle Ralph loved her, and she returned his love with all the fervor of her pure heart; but Mary's father would not consent to the marriage until she was twenty-one. Uncle Ralph

was graduated, and became the doctor of Glenfield, contenting himself with an occasional visit to Mary's home in the city. In the meantime my grandfather Foster died, and left the old place to uncle Ralph.

"It was a bright morning in June. The church was trimmed with flowers, and garlands of evergreen. Your grandfather married them; and the church-bell rang merrily, while the happy faces of the villagers added to their joy. How delighted your Aunt Martha and I were, when we went to see the house when it was finished for the reception of the bride. I shall never forget the look of love and pride which uncle Ralph gave her, as with girlish glee she flitted from room to room. 'How much happiness I expect to enjoy in this beautiful home, dear Ralph,' said she, as the stage drove to the door which was to take them for a short trip

to the White Mountains, the tops of which you see yonder.

"They had been married a little more than a year, and aunt Mary had endeared herself to uncle Ralph's patients. She was like a ray of light in a sick-room. One afternoon a message came for uncle Ralph to go to Mrs. Bruce's, which was about two miles from the village. 'I wish, Mary,' said he, 'that you would go with me. Your cheerfulness will do more for her than all my medicine. She has been nervous and despondent since her husband's death. Come, my little sunbeam,' continued he, caressing her. 'You can cure this patient better than I can.' Aunt Mary folded the little garment she was making, — the one you saw in her room on the work-stand. Ah, my child! how little we know what a day may bring forth! As they were returning home, aunt Mary

persuaded her husband to drive through the valley. The new railroad had just been opened; and, as they were about to cross the track, the shrill whistle of the engine was heard, and in an instant the train, which was hidden behind a hill, came around the bend at full speed. The horse became frightened at this strange object, and aunt Mary was thrown violently from the carriage. Her head struck upon a rock, killing her instantly. Uncle Ralph was carried home insensible. As he regained his strength, it was pitiful to see him wander about the house. He came to stay with us until his sorrow was softened. Gradually my poor father, who keenly felt his sister's violent death, led his thoughts to that world where parting is unknown.

"How often," continued Mrs. Westburne, "while sitting in this room, I have heard my dear father in his study

praying with uncle Ralph for resignation to bear their heavy grief. And now, my child, you know what uncle Ralph has suffered.''

"Dear, good uncle Ralph! And, mamma, he has never buried his love. He holds her yet in his heart.

"Well, mamma, if I am so fortunate, when I am a woman, as to have some one to love me, like uncle Ralph, I shall adore him; and if God takes me first, I will be his guardian angel.''

"Ah, Kate, you know not what will be your lot when you arrive to womanhood. But always keep the love of God in your heart; and if evil days come, look beyond them, and cling to your Savior's love, which will never leave you,'' replied Mrs. Westburne.

THE MOTHER'S DEATH

" Like strains of music on the ear
Thy name shall fall upon and cheer
My soul, allaying every fear, — my
mother.
And when we meet on yon blest shore,
With those dear ones who've gone before,
How sweet 'twill be to part no more, —
my mother."

CHAPTER XII

THE MOTHER'S DEATH

"YOUR father and the boys will be here next week," said Mrs. Westburne, as she entered the sitting-room with an open letter in her hand, one beautiful afternoon in October.

"Oh, I shall be so glad to see them! Uncle Ralph has promised that we shall go nutting in his woods. He says that the frost is opening the burs," said Kate.

"Here is a letter for you, Kate," continued Mrs. Westburne.

"It is from Joe. I will read it, mamma."

"DEAR KATE, — We are coming with papa, Tommy and I. I have done as I have promised, — behaved like a saint, and I almost feel like one; but I don't want to be too good, because I've heard that the good die young. I guess father was awful proud of me examination day. Now I go to Master Noyes's academy, to prepare for West Point. You know I've always wanted to be a soldier. I guess your chums will be glad to see you. I'm almost afraid to go past your school-house, because they hold on to my coat-tails, and ask so many questions. I bet Tommy and I have missed you more than they have. It has been dull enough without mamma

and you. Father told Ruth this morning that he was anxious to have you at home again, so you may look for us Thursday. I won't write any more, because I shall see you soon. Your affectionate JOE and TOMMY."

It was almost sunset when the stage stopped at the parsonage, and Mr. Westburne, with Joe and Tommy, alighted.

"You won't go away again and stay so long, will you, Kate?" asked Tommy after the greeting was over. "We haven't had any fun since you have been gone, have we, Joe?"

"No; but I've studied more than I ever did before, and I am better for it. I'm almost fifteen, and next year uncle George says I can go to West Point."

The next day brought Lucy, Mattie, and uncle Ralph.

The Ancient Pump and the Ancient Town-crier

"There was a heavy frost last night, and the chestnuts are dropping from the burs. I will send for the children to-morrow, and bring them home when I am tired of them," said uncle Ralph, preparing to go.

The next morning the children were in high glee with the prospect of visiting uncle Ralph. Mattie stood at the window, watching.

"Here comes a two-seated wagon for us, with Ben Moulton," shouted Mattie, as the wagon whirled by the window and drew up at the garden-door.

"Are the youngsters ready?" asked Ben with a smiling face, as he opened the sitting-room door, where Kate and her cousins were putting on their wraps.

They were soon speeding over the road. Uncle Ralph climbed the trees with Joe and Tommy, and shook down the ripe nuts. He joined in their sports; and in their voices he seemed

to hear the voices of his boyhood, and to forget his sorrow.

"What are all those red-roofed houses on the hill in the distance, uncle?" asked Kate, as she stood at the window after dinner the next day.

"That is the Shaker village. After Ben has eaten his dinner and harnessed the horse we will make them a visit."

They were slowly passing a dilapidated school-house. The long grass had hidden the steps and path where so many little feet had once trodden.

"There is where your grandmother and I were taught to read and write. It seems but yesterday when I climbed those trees, and sailed my tiny boat in yonder brook."

"Why don't they repair the old school-house, and send the children there?" asked Kate.

"There are no children to send. The walls of that deserted farm-house

which we just passed, once rang with the merry voices of five children, and many happy days I have spent with them ; but now they are scattered far and wide. The city life has more attraction, and the old homes are forsaken.''

As they drew near the village they met a number of Shakers going to their work. Elder Moore, the head of the community, was a warm friend of uncle Ralph's, and he gave the young people a hearty welcome. One of the teachers took them to the schoolroom, where they heard the children recite and sing. They visited the little fancy shop, where many pretty articles were seen, that were made by the sisters, and sold to the visitors.

Uncle Ralph bought each of the children a little fancy basket filled with preserved ginger and flagroot ; and, as Kate was admiring the little Shaker

bonnets, he bought one for each of the girls; also broad-brimmed straw hats for Joe and Tommy.

"They will do to shade our faces from the sun in the summer," said Kate, as they thanked uncle Ralph for the presents.

Then they went to the mill, and saw the great wheel grinding the corn; and the sisters took them to the garden, and gave each of them a beautiful bouquet of autumn flowers.

It was dark when they reached home, where a warm supper was awaiting them.

The next day Ben put a large basket of chestnuts into the wagon, and uncle Ralph took them to the parsonage.

"This visit to uncle Ralph is another sunny spot in my childhood to remember, mamma," said Kate that night as she went to her bed-chamber.

The fortnight was almost gone. Saturday night came, and Joe said it seemed but yesterday since they had left home.

The sun was shining brightly among the trees in the brown October woods as they rode to church on that lovely Sabbath day. Many an anxious eye was turned toward the pastor's pew, for Mrs. Westburne had many dear friends in her native village. Not a seat was vacant. The people seemed to feel that it was the last time that their pastor's family would all meet together. The sermon which followed the hymn was again from Revelation : "And God shall wipe all tears from their eyes." He spoke of "the celestial city with its walls of gold and its gates of pearl ; the river of water of life, and the trees which border its margin ; the inhabitants, in their robes of white. Once we reach that bound-

less shore, we are safe, resting in the bosom of God.''

Uncle Nathan, aunt Martha, and the children stayed at the parsonage until the next day, when the Westburnes were to return to their home.

We will pass over the parting of Mrs. Westburne with her parents and sister. It was sunset when they reached Bellville. Mrs. Westburne failed rapidly as the autumn days passed.

It was Sunday evening, the week before Christmas. Kate was arranging the little round table for her mother's tea; and as she toasted the bread over the glowing coals, Mrs. Westburne looked fondly but sadly on the bright, rosy face. After Bridget had removed the tea-tray, Kate brought her little chair to her mother's side, and read her evening chapter.

"Kate,'' said her mother, "next Sat-

The Doctor Calls

urday will be Christmas evening, and I have felt all day that this will be my last Sabbath on earth. Look at those beautiful sunset clouds and the bright evening star. Before another Sabbath evening my soul may be beyond those stars. When you see my wasted form cold and still," continued Mrs. Westburne, drawing the little head upon her lap, "remember my soul has left that frail earthly casket to live forever in the sunlight of our Heavenly Father's love."

Kate tried to restrain her tears. She was learning to suffer and be strong.

Little preparation was made for Christmas. Saturday afternoon Mrs. Westburne called her family around her bedside. She bade them "Goodbye," and lay looking at their sad, tearful faces. "Dear Edward! dear children! You will never forget me.

I will watch for you in the spirit-land.''

It was early dawn, and yet that dear mother lingered as though she could not leave her loved ones.

"Do you know what day this is?'' asked Mr. Churchill.

With a heavenly smile she answered, —

"*Thy earthly Sabbath, Lord, I love,*
But there's a purer rest above.
Oh! I shall soon that rest obtain,
From sin, from sorrow, and from pain."

Mr. Westburne put his arm under her pillow, and supported her head. "Going home,'' she whispered, with an angelic smile which left its impress upon the face long after the pure soul had left the body. As the weeping family stood looking at the lovely face, smiling even in death, Mr. Churchill broke the silence.

"Oh blessed Lord! Let us die the death of the rightous, and let our last end be like hers."

The winter months seemed long and dreary to the afflicted family. Nurse Ashby's motherly care and cheerful words did much to lighten their sorrow.

Mr. Westburne wished his wife's chamber to remain as when she was with them. One Sunday afternoon Kate timidly opened the door of her mother's room, and saw her father sitting in her mother's arm-chair, with his head bowed upon his hands; and, going softly to his side, she put her arms around his neck.

"Dear papa, you have me, and the rest of us. Mamma told us not to mourn for her."

"I know it, darling. Our loss is her gain;" and he folded his little comforter in his arms, as she told him

of the conversation with her mother on that last Sabbath evening ; and as the twilight deepened, they felt that her spirit was hovering over them, and their hearts were lighter as they joined the family circle.

It was toward the end of January when Ruth received the following letter from Arthur Morse.

PRINCETON, SABBATH EVE.

DEAR RUTH, — You have experienced your first great sorrow, the loss of the nearest and dearest earthly friend. Who can fill a mother's place ? It is the first link in that chain which will be constantly drawing your thoughts and affections to God, who, in lessening your ties on earth, is increasing your treasures in heaven.

In a few months I shall have spent my last Sunday here. How short the

time seems since I wrote you the first letter from Princeton ! I long to be about my Master's work. Pray for me, dear one, that my life may be prolonged, and grace given me to bring many souls to Jesus ; but look beyond, dearest. Our Heavenly Father knows what is best for us.

The winter months had passed, and the children were looking forward with yearning hearts for the warm spring days when they could plant the flower-bushes upon their mother's grave. It was a lovely morning the first of May when they went to the cemetery.

"Ruth, let Sam plant my white rose-bush at the head of mother's grave," pleaded Kate.

"Mother loved white flowers best," said Tommy, with tears in his eyes, as he watched Joe planting lilies of the valley on the mound.

The Mistress of the Household in Marble

"White is the emblem of purity. We will have none but white, sweet-scented flowers on dear mamma's grave," sighed Joe.

"Put my Easter lily and these white daisies here, Sam," said Alice.

"What are those flowers, Ruth?" asked Kate.

"Snow-drops. We must keep flowers blooming upon mother's grave until the snow comes," replied Ruth.

They kept fresh flowers all summer in the urn at the head of the grave, and many tears were shed and prayers breathed at that hallowed spot.

ARTHUR MORSE AND RUTH WESTBURNE'S DEATH

"She gathered the flowers, and pressed
their leaves,
And folded her hands in silent prayer;
That the reaper Death, as he seeks his
sheaves,
Might hasten the hour of those waiting
there."

CHAPTER XIII.

ARTHUR MORSE AND RUTH WESTBURNE'S DEATH.

ARTHUR MORSE had bidden farewell to the Seminary, carrying with him testimonials of his piety and scholarship. After preaching in several vacant pulpits in the vicinity of Oldbury, he accepted a call to one where his labors had been blessed.

It was Ruth's twenty-first birthday, and she was conversing with Arthur.

"If God permits, on New Year's Day we will commence our new life and New Year together, darling?" pleaded Arthur.

"Yes," responded Ruth. "By that time you will be stronger, and more acquainted with your people, and you will need my help."

He drew the dear head to his breast, and they talked of the time when they should recount their hopes and fears together.

Arthur was gaining upon the affections and confidence of his people, and had entered fully upon his pastoral and pulpit labors; but the task was an arduous one for his delicate system. As the autumn leaves rustled on the ground, he felt that his earthly days were numbered; but his failing strength led him to give himself to his Master's work with redoubled energy. Toward the middle of December he was almost too feeble to preach.

It was a sad Sunday to his people, who had learned to love him so well, and they listened to his sermon with tearful eyes. Fervent were their prayers that he might be spared to them; but as they looked upon his fragile form, they felt that it would soon molder in the grave; and the eye that beamed upon them with affection must as quickly disappear.

New Year's morning found Arthur Morse upon his dying bed; and Ruth Westburne sat by his bedside, with her face buried in the pillow.

"Ruth, I want to talk with you. Let me see your face, darling." She raised her head, and the tears fell fast.

"We expected to begin our lives together on this New Year's Day, but God has ordered it otherwise. Dear one, you will have another treasure in heaven; another link in the chain to

draw you there; and if I am permitted, Ruth, I will be your guardian angel there, as you have been mine here.''

Mrs. Morse entered the room with some flowers which had been sent to him. He took them, and, smiling, said, —

'' These are the last earthly flowers I shall ever see. I shall soon enter that beautiful world where flowers never fade ; and, dear Ruth, I know that you will keep my grave fresh with sweet flowers. You will pray by my grave, and think of him whose short life you have made so happy ; and I will see you from my blessed home.''

'' ' Oh glorious hour, oh blest abode!
I shall be near, and like my God.' ''

It seemed as if his face shone with a glory from heaven. His last prayer was for his church and his loved ones,

and in the waning of the New Year's Day he sweetly breathed out his soul on Jesus' breast.

It was a great blow to all the cherished hopes and joys of Ruth Westburne's life ; but she bowed to the will of God, and felt that the parting would not be long.

At Arthur's request, Ruth had remained with him during his illness; and now Mrs. Morse and Dora were loath to have her leave them, but her pale face showed them that she needed a change.

It was a bright winter afternoon. A cheerful fire was glowing in the grate in the sitting-room when Ruth entered with Alice. Good Nurse Ashby received her with open arms, and upon that motherly breast Ruth opened the flood-gates of her heart.

" There, there, darling ! a good cry has relieved your poor heart. Now

try to sleep a little while upon the lounge before the children come from school;'' and Nurse folded the warm shawl over the weary one, and Ruth slept. Silently Kate and her brothers entered the room. Ruth was still sleeping, and with tearful eyes they pressed their lips to her pale brow.

In the deep and sensitive nature of Ruth Westburne the death of Arthur Morse had taken a strong hold. He had been her ideal of a perfect man, and the tendrils of her whole being had clung to him as the ivy clings to the oak.

"I will not be selfish. I must try to forget my sorrow, and live to make those happy who are left to me. I have still many to love. Is it not so, father?'' asked Ruth, a few days after her return home.

Her father folded her in his arms as he repeated that beautiful verse, —

" 'So shall our moments smoothly run,
While here we wait our Father's will.
Our rising and our setting sun
Rolls gently up and down the hill.' "

Although her poor, tired heart was suffering, Ruth went to her daily duties with a gentle smile. She had tasted life's bitter sorrow, and knew how to comfort those who mourned; but in the silence of night she would grieve for the lost one, and pray for grace and strength.

Spring had come again. The trees were putting out their leaves, and the earth was clothing itself in its robe of green. Ruth went to Arthur's grave; and, as she laid the lilies of the valley upon the mound, she thought of his loving request, "You will keep my grave fresh with sweet flowers; you will pray there," and she leaned her

head against the monument, and wept. She heard footsteps approaching, and, looking up, she saw Mrs. Morse and Dora, who mingled their tears with hers.

It was late one sunny afternoon in June when Mr. Westburne entered the sitting-room. Ruth was reclining upon the lounge. Her thin, pale face caused him much uneasiness, and to see her thus waste away was more than his heart could bear. He bowed his head upon his breast. While thus lost in sad thoughts, Ruth opened her eyes. She arose, and, lifting her father's head, kissed him, and, putting her arm within his, said, "Let us walk in the garden, father;" and by cheering conversation she sought to divert his mind from sad thoughts. As they entered the house a letter from Aunt Martha lay upon the table, inviting Ruth and Alice to pass the summer

at Glenfield. "The change would be a benefit to Ruth," aunt Martha wrote.

The family were sitting in the twilight the day before the two sisters were to go to the country village.

"Joe," said Mr. Westburne, "I had an excellent account of you to-day from Master Brooks. He says you and Dick de Guevára are making great progress in your studies. How would you like to enter West Point in the winter? There will be vacancies then for you and for Dick."

"Oh, father, I should like to go, especially if Dick goes also. I shall try to be brave. That is the principal trait in a soldier's life."

"Yes," replied Mr. Westburne. "In learning to fight the battles of life, we must be valiant and steadfast in every good cause, and we shall be victorious in the end."

It was a pleasant afternoon in October. Ruth, Alice, and the children carried a basket of flowers, the last of the season, to decorate the graves.

"This time next month, perhaps mamma's grave will again be hidden under the snow," said Kate, in a sad voice.

"It will not matter. Mother is not there, Kate," replied Alice.

"I wonder if mamma can see us here?" asked Tommy, looking up at the sky.

"She is a saint, a spirit, now, Tommy. Perhaps she can see us if we don't see her," replied Joe.

"I hope they will lay my body in this corner. It will be almost by the side of Arthur," murmured Ruth, as she laid the flowers and evergreen upon his grave.

As the winter approached, Ruth became subject to fainting; and Mr.

Westburne had decided to take her to Florida for the winter, when he went to West Point with Joe and Dick.

One night Ruth became restless; but toward morning she gave a deep sigh, and became quiet.

"She has gone to sleep at last," thought Alice, who slept so late the next morning that Nurse Ashby entered their chamber to awaken them.

"Ruth did not go to sleep until nearly morning, and that is why I have overslept," whispered Alice, dressing herself quickly.

Nurse bent over Ruth, who seemed to be peacefully sleeping. A smile rested upon the lovely face. But Ruth Westburne was asleep in Jesus, never again to wake and weep.

Again the afflicted family bowed to the will of God. They laid her in the corner, near the grave of him she loved

so well, and then returned to their saddened home.

"Dear Ruth! How I shall miss her! Everything that I love dies!" sobbed Kate that evening, as she sat on a foot-stool with her head in Nurse's lap.

"But we shall see them again, where parting and death can never come. Does not God restore to us the beautiful flowers and singing-birds every summer? and when He takes them from us for awhile, we appreciate and love them more as we think of the time when we shall see them again. And so with our loved ones, — they have gone before us to draw us to them," said Nurse.

"Do you think Ruth has found mother and Arthur yet, father?" asked Joe.

"I hope so, my dear boy. When earth's sorrows are over, then we shall all meet to part no more."

"Perhaps Jesus told mamma and Arthur that Ruth was coming, and they went to meet her at the Golden Gate," said Tommy.

And thus they talked of that beautiful world, and the loved ones awaiting them there, "when the day breaks and the shadows flee away."

JOE AND DICK GO TO THE WAR

"My voice is still for war.
Gods! Can a senate long debate
Which of the two to choose, slavery or death?"

CHAPTER XIV.

JOE AND DICK GO TO THE WAR.

MORE than four years have passed since we visited the Westburne family. Kate, who had been graduated by the Academy at B——, was spending the winter in Rio Janeiro, Brazil, with Hilda Sousa, her old room-mate. Tommy had finished his course at Gove's College, and contemplated entering his

father's business. Joe and Dick de Guevára would end their studies at West Point in a few weeks. During those four years strange rumors of war were echoed abroad. Men were going to and fro. What was the cause of this commotion? 'Twas slavery, the worst crime man perpetrates against his fellow-creature. For nearly a hundred years the nation had allowed the slaveholder to degrade the negro, but during most of those years the abolition of slavery had been agitated by brave and righteous men; and now God was listening to the cry of His children. "Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" (Jeremiah ix. 9.)

Spring had come, and Kate had returned from Brazil, with glowing

accounts of that country and its people.

"And now, Kate," said Mr. Westburne one evening, after she had described the climate, the fruit, the birds and flowers, "tell us about the people, and what you see to admire in them more than in the people of your own country."

"They are not so selfish as we are, father. Mr. Sousa, Hilda's father, has a large coffee plantation a few miles from the city; and three years ago he liberated all his slaves, but they would not leave him. He pays them wages for their labor every Saturday afternoon, and they live, as they always have, in their cabins on the plantation. Mr. Sousa says they accomplish more work than when they were slaves. He has built a schoolhouse, where the negro children are taught to read, write, and cipher. The emperor, Dom

Pedro, gave Mr. Sousa the title of Baron ; but he does not use it. He told the emperor that he had only done his duty; and five years ago Mr. Sousa's mother freed all her slaves. Many of the Brazilians want to abolish slavery from the country, and when they gain over the majority it will be done; besides, they do not seem to crave for wealth and power so much as the people of our country. When they make a competency, they retire to enjoy it, leaving their business to their sons. And, father, Mr. Sousa gives a feast in a grove in his beautiful garden once a week to all the poor people who live in his district; and there are many other rich men, in different parts of the city, who do the same thing. So you see, the poor enjoy a feast as well as the rich. I asked Mr. Sousa why he did this act of kindness; and he said, when he saw the grateful, happy faces of

those people, that he felt he enjoyed the feast more than they did, for he understood the full meaning of our Saviour's words, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

"What language do they speak, Kate?" asked Tommy.

"The Portuguese language; but many of them speak the English and French languages also. And, father, the Portuguese are a very generous people; for when the Brazilians were under the rule of Portugal, they wanted to become independent, and have an emperor, and the Portuguese nation gave them their freedom without a war."

"I bet this country wouldn't have given up such a rich country as Brazil without some hard kicking," said Tommy.

One afternoon in June Mr. Westburne came home with a letter from

Joe, saying that Dick and he had received their commissions in the army, and were coming to Oldbury.

The war-cloud had burst, and Fort Sumter had received its baptism of shot and shell. Men looked aghast at each other. Business was paralyzed. Dismay and terror filled every heart. Joe and Dick arrived in their uniforms, looking little like the two merry schoolboys of former days.

"I hardly realize yet, Joe, that you are a soldier, going to a terrible civil war," said Mr. Westburne in a sad voice.

"It seems like a dream to me also, father; but Dick and I will take care of each other. Duty calls, and we must go. I believe, before this war is over, every slave in the United States will be a free man. Oh, this war never would have happened if our Colonial fathers, in securing their own

freedom, had freed, too, the black-man in bondage at that time. It was our ancestors' selfishness that has brought this curse upon us, an inheritance which I am sure will be worse than any hell!"

"What you say is very true, my boy; but slavery was not so bad then as it is to-day."

"It was an evil then, and should not have been allowed to grow and become the curse it is to-day," said Joe.

"And think, Mr. Westburne," said Dick, "of all the innocent men, women, and children who will have to suffer by this fearful war. As soon as I come in possession of my estate in Havana I shall free every slave; and I pray God will spare my life to do it," continued he in a firm voice. "Surely Abraham Lincoln was chosen by God to liberate the slaves, and I cannot but think he will excel every President

that our nation has had; and that clause in the Declaration of Independence, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' will be no longer a miserable fraud, and a reproach upon this nation.''

The family were assembled in the sitting-room a few days before Joe and Dick's departure for the war, when Alice entered the room with Dora Morse.

"Father," said Alice, running up to him, and putting her arms around his neck, "Dora is going to the war as a nurse, and she says that there is a place for me; and I will not lose sight of Joe and Dick. You will let me go, won't you, father?" she pleaded.

It was some time before Mr. Westburne could speak, and then in an agitated voice he asked, —

"Alice, do you think you are strong enough to see the dreadful suffering after a battle?"

"Yes, father, I am sure I am; and if I am not, God will help me; and. father, we have felt and seen suffering at home. If I can relieve and comfort the poor soldier, I shall not have lived in vain. I think, if mother and Ruth were here, they would say I am right in wanting to go."

"Mother and father said that if Arthur were here he would go as a chaplain; and I am going in his stead as a nurse. We shall be together," urged Dora.

"You can go, Alice, and witness the evils and sufferings of men," said Mr. Westburne.

"Alice and Dora will be our angels,

and bind up our wounds, Dick,'' said Joe in a cheerful voice.

"And Tommy and I will send you boxes of goodies and clothes. You will write, Alice, and tell us where to send them,'' said Kate.

"I may be drafted, and have to go also, Kate,'' said Tommy.

In a few weeks our young officers and nurses were at their posts of duty. Joe and Dick soon found that a soldier's life was no longer a dream, but a reality. They took part in many skirmishes. They passed through the dreadful battle of Gettysburg unscarred. Four long, painful years had nearly passed and the cruel war was drawing to a close. It was after the emancipation of the slaves, and in the last great battle before Richmond, that our brave Joe fell.

Joe was in front of his soldiers when he received his mortal wound. Dick rushed to his side.

"It is only a flesh wound," said Joe, as he staggered and fell into Dick's arms. "What is all that shouting for?" he asked.

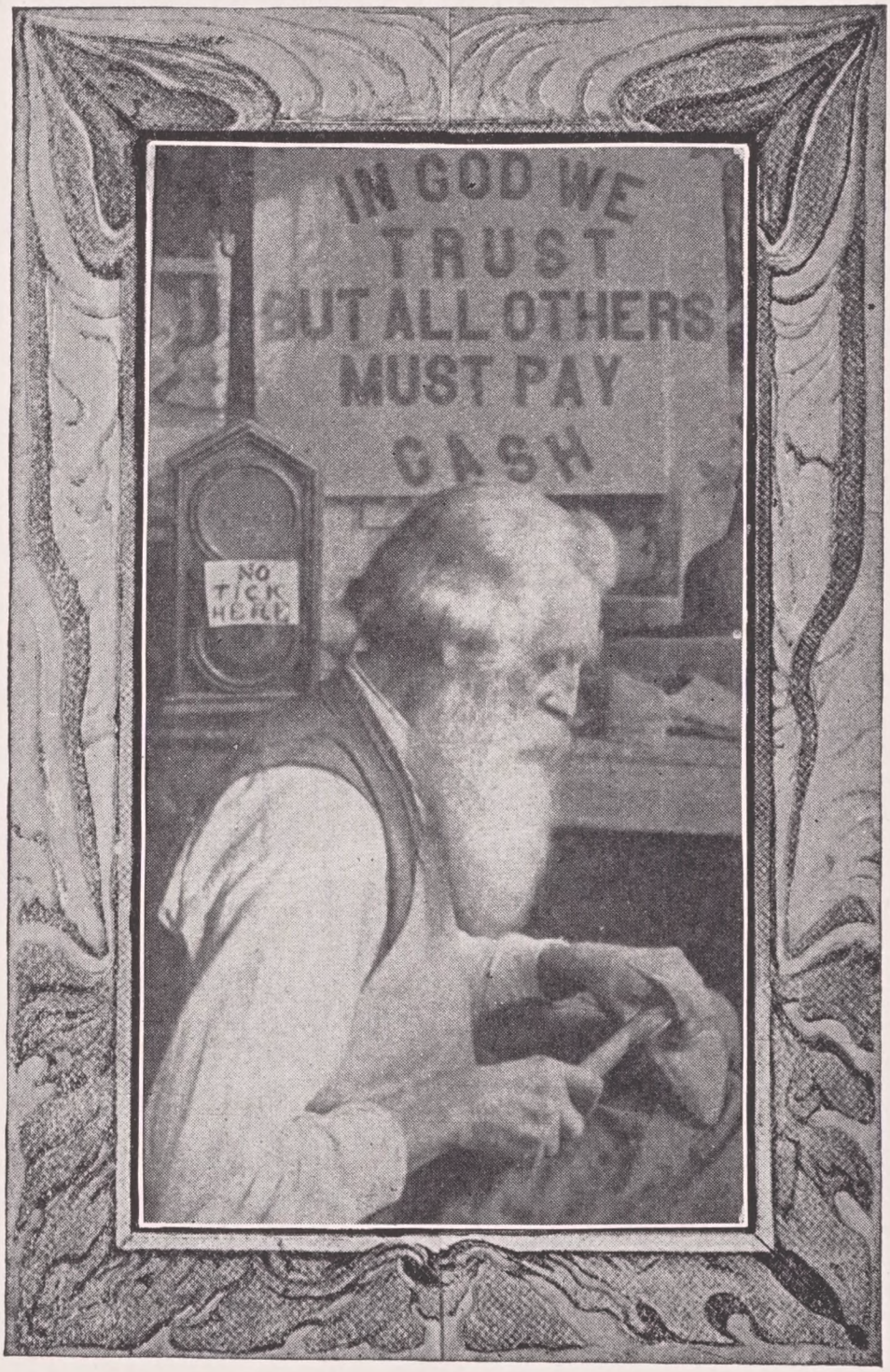
"Lee has retreated! Look, Joe! the Stars and Stripes are waving over the fortifications of Richmond!" shouted Dick.

Joe raised his head, and smiled upon the flag.

"Thank God that I have lived to see this day!" he exclaimed. "The Union is saved, and the slaves are free. Now I can die contented."

Joe was taken to the hospital; and every effort was made by Dr. Bentley, the surgeon, to remove the ball, and at last he succeeded; but the wound would not heal, and poor Joe grew weaker and weaker.

"Alice, I want to see father and Tommy. Can't I be taken home?" pleaded Joe.



An Oldbury Saint Crispian

A telegram was sent to Mr. Westburne, who arrived in a few days, and poor Joe was carried home to die.

"Father," said Joe, the day before he died, "from my boyhood I always hated fighting; but I knew that the bickerings between the North and South would some time bring a terrible war upon the nation, and that it would end in freeing the slaves. That was why I wanted to go to West Point. I thought, if I were called to fight for my country, I should be better prepared; and, father, when I go to the Saviour, He will send His Spirit to comfort you; and Dick will take my place. He promised me, when we were in the army, that he would if I fell; and, to Tommy, Dick will be a noble brother. We shall all meet again, never more to part."

"Oh, Joe, I cannot let you go!"

sobbed Tommy, with his head upon Joe's pillow.

"Father," said Joe the next morning, "I saw mother and Ruth in my sleep last night. I am sure that Jesus will send me to them to-day." In the twilight hour the brave and gallant Joe left his loved ones with a smile, as if he were going on a pleasant journey; and they laid his body by the side of his mother and Ruth.

Joe had been the life of that home. His sunny nature had filled their hearts with glee; alas how they missed him, as they assembled again in the sitting-room! Tommy was silently weeping.

"Dear Joe, my noble-hearted brother, playmate of my girlhood! I shall never see you again on earth!" sobbed Kate.

"We shall see him when the Saviour calls for us," said Alice, wiping the tears from her eyes.

Dick de Guavára was walking up and down the long sitting-room. He had not shed a tear since Joe's death. Suddenly he threw himself upon a chair, and cried, —

"I loved him also. He was my playmate, my companion, and the best friend I ever had. You have each other to love. I have no one now. Oh Joe, my heart is in your grave!" And tears flowed from Dick's eyes.

The love that Joe and Dick had for each other opened Kate's eyes, and turned her thoughts into another channel.

"We all love you, Dick. You shall be our brother. Joe left you his place," said Kate, wiping the tears from his eyes.

"Yes, Dick, I feel better now I have you in Joe's place, and I will love you for Joe," said Tommy, putting his arms around his neck.

"Why, father, Dick has lightened our sorrow, and made us feel more reconciled to our loss," said Alice. "Our Saviour said, 'Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.' And does He not tell us to comfort one another?"

"I told Captain Brown before he died and left you in my care, Dick, that I would take you into my heart and home, for I knew how dearly Joe loved you," said Mr. Westburne, as he embraced Dick.

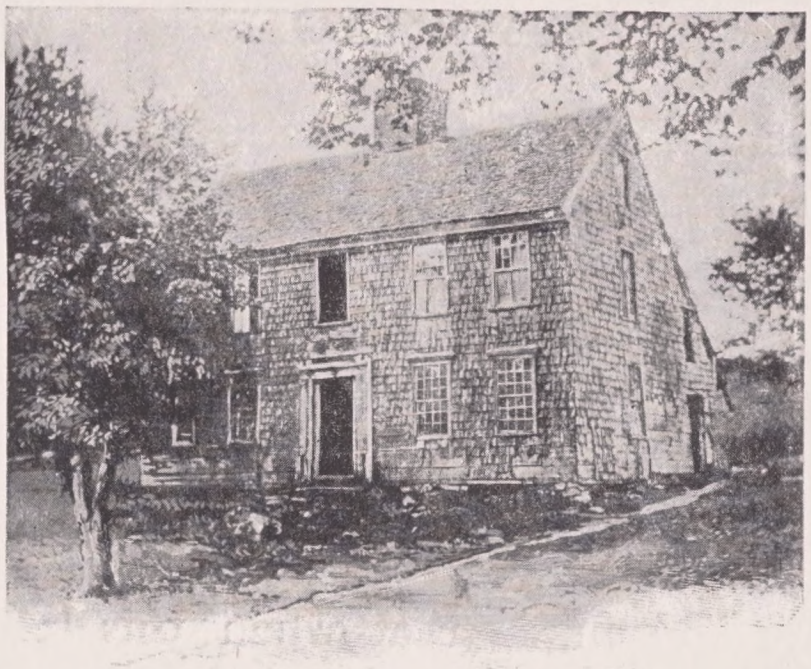
And Nurse Ashby pressed a kiss upon his brow.

Jesus had sent the Comforter, His Holy Spirit, to their hearts, and softened their grief.

ALICE AND KATE MARRY

DEATH OF MR. WEST-BURNE

"'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught
of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the pale-
ness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and
the shroud;
Oh! why should the sprit of mortal be
proud?"



CHAPTER XV.

ALICE AND KATE MARRY.

THREE years had rolled by. Alice was married to Doctor Bently, whom she had learned to love while a nurse in the army, and had gone to her home in New York City. Dick had taken possession of his estate in Havana, where he had gone. Tommy was established in his father's business. Mr. Westburne was resting from the toil and care of busi-

ness life, and Kate was still the household angel.

A few days before Dick de Guevára left Havana for his adopted country, Kate received a letter from him which gladdened all their hearts.

"DEAR KATE, — Tell father, Tommy, and nurse that when this letter reaches you I shall be on my journey home. How I have yearned for the time to come when I could write you this, — when my affairs would be arranged so I could leave them, and come home to the hearts I love, and who love me. Your DICK."

"Father, Dick can use his title now — Count de Guevára," said Tommy.

"He will always be Dick to me, Tommy," said Kate; and as Mr. Westburne and Tommy laughed, Kate changed the subject by saying, —

"You know, father, that Alice, little Ruth, and the doctor will visit us this summer, and they will be so glad to see Dick."

Dick Guevára, or Count de Guevára, was a fine specimen of a Spanish nobleman, tall and dignified, with an intelligent face; while his frank nature endeared him to his friends and the family, who received him with open arms on his return.

"Kate," said Dick, as they were walking in the garden a few days after his return, "will you give me the answer now which you promised to give me when I should return from Havana. Will you love me and be my wife?"

"Dick," replied Kate, with a joyful smile, in which sadness was blended, "on that day, so long ago, when dear Joe left us, and you were so lonely, and craved our love, I saw that I

should have to love you, and I have loved you ever since; but, Dick, when I am your wife, you will not take me away from father and Tommy and dear nurse Ashby, will you? Think how much they will miss me;" and Kate laid her head upon Dick's shoulder.

"You shall not leave home nor country, dear heart. Oh Kate! what happiness, what peace, to have you to love and cherish all my life!" and Dick put his arm around her, and kissed her.

"You must tell father and Tommy," said Kate.

"I told them before I went to Havana, darling."

"Kate," said Mr. Westburne that evening, as she bade her father good-night, "I rejoice that you have consented to become Dick's wife. It was the dearest wish of Joe's heart."

"And I am glad also," said Tommy. "I was afraid some other girl would get Dick."

Dick and Kate were married in the autumn, before Doctor Bentley's family went home.

"Tell us, Dick," said Tommy one evening, "how did your slaves receive their freedom?"

"My father had been a kind master," replied Dick, "and I found the negroes on my plantation in a better condition than they are on many of the Cuban plantations. The first thing I did was to arrange more comfortable quarters for the few old rheumatic slaves that were past labor, which I did by taking a wing off the palace, and making it into rooms where they could live free from the dampness of the cabins on the plantations. Then the carpenters built new cottages, and re-

paired the old cabins. I took one of the store-houses, and had it arranged for a school-house for the children; and I have employed the agent's daughter, Miss Gonsalves, to teach them to read, write, and cipher. One Sunday morning I called all the negroes together in the school-house, and told them that they were no longer my slaves, that they were freemen. At first they did not understand me ; but when I told them that they were their own masters, and could earn money, like the white man, some of them asked, 'Where shall we go ? Mas'r is good to us.' I told them that they could live on the plantation and work as they had done, and I would pay them every Saturday night for their labor, so long as they were honest and faithful. One of the oldest negroes shouted, 'We will never leave mas'r ! Hallelujah ! de day ob jubilee has

come ! ' and I left them in the school-house, singing and shouting, ' Nobody owns dis nigger but de Lord. Glory hallelujah ! ' Mr. Gonsalves, one of my agents, told me, the day before I left Havana, that the negroes had never worked so well, nor seemed so happy, since he had been on the plantation ; and he said he thought that it would be the best thing for Cuba if the slaves were all liberated. ''

Another year had passed. Alice and little Ruth came from New York to spend the summer months.

" Kate, '' said Alice a few days after her arrival, " I see a great change in father. He is so thin, and has such a far-off look. ''

" I have noticed that look, and so has nurse Ashby, '' replied Kate.

" Nurse, '' said Mr. Westburne one

morning, "I wish you would have my wife's chamber aired. I want to use it as my sleeping-room hereafter. Since Ruth left it, I have made it an oratory, where I could go to meditate and pray ; but last night, in my sleep, I saw my wife in her chamber. She stood by the bed, then she smiled as she pointed to her arm-chair, and vanished through the west window. Perhaps it is better to use the room now."

So the sunbeams came into the windows. The fire glowed upon the hearth ; and the family gathered again in the mother's chamber, sacred by many sweet recollections.

It was at the close of a beautiful Sabbath day. Mr. Westburne was sitting in his arm-chair as the family entered the room. There was a smile and a far-off look upon his face as he repeated, —

"'*Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?*
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.'

"It is humility, and that simple, childlike confidence and faith in Christ, which draws our Heavenly Father to us; and, my dear children, He has softened, and He will soften, all your afflictions. Kate," he continued, "will you and Alice sing 'Departed Days'?"

Kate went to the organ and played while Alice sang, —

"*Sweet voices from the spirit-land I hear;*"

and, as the song ended, Mr. West-

burne whispered, "They come, beloved ones," and with a long sigh he joined them on "the distant shore."

At first the family could not realize that their dear father had left them. They thought he was sleeping in his wife's arm-chair by the open window. The brilliant sunset clouds were scattered over the heavens, and the evening star appeared in the sky as the clouds faded away.

"How can we mourn a death like that?" asked the Count de Guevára, in a low voice.

"I believe he saw his loved ones coming to bear him away from his heaven on earth to his eternal heaven above," replied Nurse Ashby.

And thus they comforted each other, learning to grow strong under affliction, and abiding in Jesus, who whispered, "Let not your hearts be troubled. My peace I leave with you. I go to

prepare a place for you, and ye shall see your loved ones again.''

Time passed, and a little Joe had come, to gladden the hearts of Kate and Dick ; and every May it was little Joe who went to decorate with flag and flowers the grave of his uncle Joe.

In the meantime Brazil had peacefully liberated her slaves, but the tyranny of the Spanish rulers in Cuba was causing skirmishes throughout that island. It was the greatest desire and prayer of the Count de Guevára's life to see slavery abolished from his native land, and he would often say to Kate, ''I shall live to see that blessed day.''

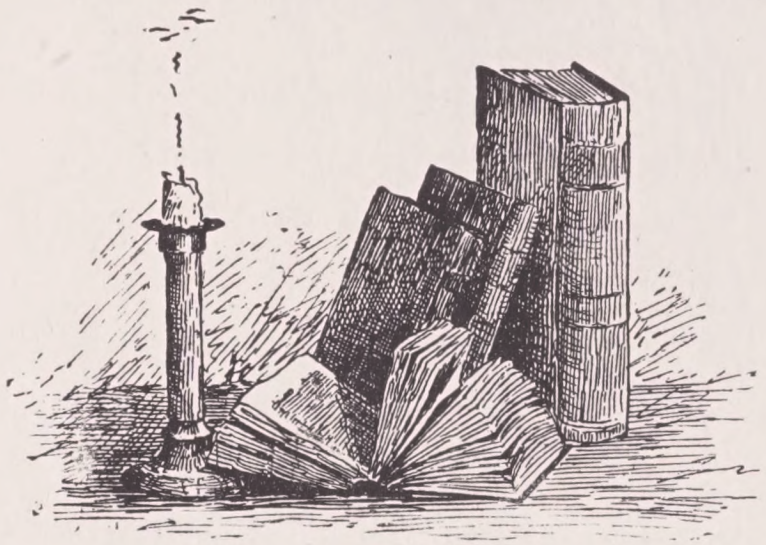
Thirty-five years had passed since the Civil War, and General Guevára lived to see his prayer answered; and bravely did that noble and gallant sol-

dier fight to help break that cruel bondage. No slave can breathe upon the shores of the New World to-day.

Surely "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform"!

CONCLUSION

Now freedom from every mountain height
Unfolds her standard to the air.
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there.
Forever float that standard sheet
Where breathes no slave from sea to sea;
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet
And Freedom's banner over thee.



CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

IN closing this simple story of an old-fashioned home-life, how many of its dear readers have been reminded of their childhood home? — the old town with its street-pump, the town crier, and "the master so cruel and grim;" the kind father, and the gentle mother who taught them the little prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

CONCLUSION

Oh, fathers and mothers, give your children a happy home, for there you can sow the seed for good or evil in their future lives.

Our hearts rejoiced when we read in the newspaper the plan to observe the old-home week in many places in Massachusetts. May it spread throughout the United States!

We are sure God's blessing will rest upon these reunions. How many chords which have long slumbered in the heart will be awakened on a visit to the old home again.

"Perhaps some tender mother's love
First awoke the accent there,
Raised childhood's thoughts to things above,
And taught the early prayer.
But manhood's years a tale has told
Of sorrow, sin, and pain;

CONCLUSION

Then call the wanderer to the fold,
Oh, touch those chords again!

Go! like thy Master live to bless,
And weep o'er others' woes.
Each fervent prayer He will confess,
And every tear that flows.
Go! seek to be the soul's true friend,
And thou mayest make a strain
Which shall in songs of glory end.
Oh, touch those chords again!"

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